Stories of migration

Kriek, A.M.

Publication date:
2012

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

STORIES OF MIGRATION:

From Here to There and Back ...
and the Stuff In-between.

Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor aan Tilburg, Universiteit op gezag van de rector magnificus, prof. dr. Ph Eijlander, in het openbaar te verdedigen ten overstaan van een door het college van promoties aangewezen commissie in de Ruth First zaalvan de Universiteit op dinsdag 16 oktober 2012 om 10.15 uur

door

Anna Margaretha Kriek

Geboren op 5 juni 1957 te Bedford, Zuid-Afrika.

Promotores:	Prof. dr. J.B. Rijsman
	Prof. dr. S McNamee
Promotiecommissie:	Prof.dr. A. de Ruijter
	Prof. dr. M. Gergen
	Prof. dr. J. Lannaman
	Dr. N.R. Slocum-Bradley

Acknowledgements

Many people inputted into this work, although in different ways. Without each contribution, these stories would not have been told or documented. Sheila McNamee is truly The People's Professor, as she is so lovingly known by her students. She has shown more patience and endurance during the course of this project than could have been expected of any mortal. Allowing me to spend five months with her in Durham has been a gift from the gods. It was exactly what my shattered me needed at that stage. I became whole again in New England! Thank you, Sheila for being you. Thank you Jack, for feeding my body só wonderfully só often. Your generosity of spirit is something that I daily use as a yardstick. I owe my eternal gratitude to the persons who shared their stories with me. The trust you showed me humbles me. I thank each and every one of you ..You know that without your telling this work would not have happened in the way it did. I hope that I held your stories lightly enough –that I paid you the respect that you deserve.

My family. My husband, Tielman, who has *always* believed in me – against all odds – and who has *always* had my back. Who, daily, will stand to the side so that I can prevail. I love you: I always have and I always will. You truly are a man amongst men. My most precious children, Bianca and Jacques, who have hardly known their mother in any other way, but saying: 'I have to do my PhD.' Thank you for your patience with your mother, my darlings. I know that no mother can have more perfect children than I do. My Nan, and my babies, who love me with such gusto and so unconditionally. My precious friend and sister-in law, Alet, for believing in me and always egging me on. Alta, my longest and my bestest and my most loyal friend, for having listened to the PhD-whining since 1992 and who so patiently and consistently supported me across continents. What would I have done without you these past months during the final stages - of tying up the writing and preparing for the last hurdle? Kate who so calmly, graciously and elegantly bore the brunt of my insecurities and had to do much of the soothing of my jagged edges. Gita, my ridiculously generous and gracious friend who supported me in so many different ways, including so many Skype conversations and e-mails. Helen, who was the person who shared my midnight vigils in the Dimond Library in Durham and who chatted with me, ate with me, watched movies with me and was my very own 'sleep-over friend' for five whole months. What a pleasure and a privilege it was to have you. How I miss you every day. What would one do without friends?

Marelise Meyer. I don't think this project would have survived if I was the one doing the transcribing! Thank you, thank you! Magic wordsmith, Celene Hunter. I do not know of anyone who has the ability to take gobbledygook and turn it into profound words like you do. Thank you for working your particular magic on my words and for your unrelenting patience with me and your tireless hard work to meet my deadlines. I venerate you!

Lastly, my mother and father, who have long passed over into the Great Beyond. I know that you know what is happening in my present reality. You showed me that in my dreamtime. Thank you for connecting with me. Even though you are where you are, I have experienced your support and I thank you for that. Dad, I can hear your laugh of pride and, Mummy, I can see the glint in your clear blue eyes ... Thank you for giving me life and making this possible for me. I didn't tell you enough: I love you and I honour you for the parents you were to me.

I dedicate this work to all migrants...
Past, present and future.
Whatever your pushes.
Whatever your pulls.
I honour your hardships.
I celebrate your victories.
I cry about your perpetrations in the name of survival.
However big.
However small.
(Pretoria, September, 2011)

… For being a foreigner, Ashima is beginning to realize, is a sort of lifelong pregnancy – a perpetual wait, a constant burden, a continuous feeling out of sorts. It is an ongoing responsibility, a parenthesis in what had once been ordinary life, only to discover that previous life is vanished, replaced by something more complicated and demanding. Like pregnancy, being a foreigner, Ashima believes, is something that elicits the same curiosity from strangers, the same combination of pity and respect …

The Namesake - Jhumpa Lahiri

TABLE OF CONTENTS

"Smile, breathe and go slowly."
— Thich Nhat Hanh
(***Understanding Our Mind:***
50 verses on Buddhist Psychology)

before… **1**

CHAPTER ONE – HOPES, DREAMS AND DESIRES **8**

A. INTRODUCTION 8

B. ANSWERING THE 'SO WHAT – WHO CARES?' QUESTIONS 11

1. Introductionary aspects, importance and limitations of the study 11

2. What I hope to learn 14

3. Addressing Social Constructionist ideas 14

4. Literary Inquiry 15

5. Organisation of the Inquiry 15

6. Rationale supporting the inquiry, methodology and ethical issues 16

7. Applicability of the work 17

8. Accessibility to the work 18

C. CONCLUSION 18

CHAPTER TWO - POSTMODERN AND FEMINIST THINKING **19**

A. INTRODUCTION 19

B. POSTSTRUCTURALISM AND POSTMODERNISM 19

1. Different strokes for different folks? 19

1.1. A Very Brief Look at Poststructuralism 19

1.2. Poststructuralism and Postmodernism – Comrades in Arms? 20

2. Postmodernism 22

2.1. The Main Interceptors of the Postmodern Discourse 22

2.1.1. Focusing on Michel Foucault, Power, Knowledge and Patriarchy 22

2.1.2. Patriarchy 24

2.2. Focusing on Jacques Derrida and Deconstruction 26

2.3. Focusing on Feminism 28

C. CONCLUSION 30

CHAPTER THREE - SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION 31

A. INTRODUCTION 31

B. SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION 32

1. A Concise Consideration of Various Contributors to the Historical Development of Social Construction Thinking 33

- Giovanni (Giambattista) Vico (1668 – 1774) 33
- Edmund Husserl (1859 – 1938) 33
- Alfred Schutz (1899 – 1959) 34
- Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908 – 1961) 34
- Martin Heidegger (1889 – 1976) 35
- Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900 – 2002) 35
- Mikhail Bakhtin (1895 – 1975) 36
- Lev Vygotsky (1896 – 1934) 36
- Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889 – 1951) 37
- Gregory Bateson (1904 – 1980) 38
- Thomas Kuhn (1922 – 1996) 39

2. The Social Construction Journey 40

2.1. Language 40

2.2. Ultimate Truths 40

2.3. Discourse 40

2.4. Stories 41

2.5. Meaning(-making) and Meaning and Language 42

2.6. Reflection and Reflexivity 43

2.7. Our Worlds are Socially Constructed 44

C. SOME CRITICISMS - RADICAL PLURALISM, INDIVIDUALISM and NIHILISM 44

1. Radical Pluralism 44

2. Individualism 45

3. Nihilism 47

D. CONCLUSION 49

CHAPTER FOUR - CULTURE, MIGRATION AND IDENTITY 51

A. INTRODUCTION 51

B. CULTURE 51

1. Culture as Non-Bounded Entities 52

2. Meaning-Making in Culture 53

3. Inquiring into Culture 53

4. Cultural Belonging 54

5. Cultural Components 55

6. Rites of Passage 55

7. What Constitutes Culture? 56

8. Culture and Feminism 58

9. Cultural Intolerance 58

10. Cultural Assimilation and Integration 59

11. Culture - Summary 59

C. MIGRATION 61

1. Migration : A Positioning 61

2. Migration Categories 62

3. Theories of Migration 64

4. Definitions of Migration 65

5. Contextual Aspects of Migration 65
6. Migration, Transnationalism and Globalisation 66
7. Pros and Cons of Migration 68
8. Migration - A Summary 68
D. IDENTITY 69
1. Identity: A Positioning 69
2. Cultural Identity 69
3. Identity and Place 70
4. The Importance of Identity, Belonging and Temporality 71
5. Identity and Meaning-Making 72
6. Identity - A Summary 73
E. CONCLUSION 73

CHAPTER FIVE - THE HOW - METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS 75

A. INTRODUCTION 75
B. QUALITATIVE INQUIRY IN GENERAL 77
C. SPECIFICS OF THIS INQUIRY 79
1. Background to the Inquiry 79
2. Moment of Insertion 81
3. Aims of the Inquiry 83
4. Inquiry Methodology 84
4.1. Feminist Inquiry 84
4.2. Auto (Relational) Ethnography 86
4.3. Narrative Inquiry 91
5. Inquiry Process 93
5.1. Participants and Story Collecting 93
5.2. Cultural Considerations 95
6. Inquiry Procedures 96

7. Exploring the Stories 97
8. Inquiry Narrative 98
9. Ethical Considerations: Transparency, Reflexivity, Accountability 98
9.1. Introduction 98
9.2.. Ethical Considerations in General 100
9.2.1. Transparency 101
9.2.2. Reflexivity 102
9.2.3. Accountability 102
D. CONCLUSION 103

CHAPTER SIX - CONVERSATIONS 104

A. INTRODUCTION 104
B. COLLATED CONVERSATIONS 107
A. MIGRATION questions 107
B. CULTURE questions 121
C. IDENTITY questions 130
D. FINALLY questions 141
C. CONCLUSION 143

CHAPTER SEVEN - CONCLUSIONS 147

A. INTRODUCTION 147
B. LAUREL RICHARDSON'S VALUATIVE CRITERIA 149
1. Substantive Criteria 149
2. Aesthetic Criteria 151
3. Reflexivity 151
4. Impact 152
C. MARGOT'S VALUATION 152
D. DEFINITIONS 153

1. Culture 153
2. Migration 153
3. Identity 153

E. FUTURE RESEARCH TOPICS 154

F. REFLECTING ON THE AIMS OF THE INQUIRY 154

G. CONCLUSION 155

after… 157

LIST OF SOURCES 169

APPENDICES

APPENDIX ONE *180*

- Covering e-mail to Story Guides 181

APPENDIX TWO *182*

- The Story Guide - Incomplete 183

APPENDIX THREE *186*

- The Story Guides - Complete
  - ✓ Margot 187
  - ✓ Danielle, Gabriella and Gita 197
  - ✓ Gabriella : Additional 211
  - ✓ Coenie 217
  - ✓ Alina 231
  - ✓ Kon 234
  - ✓ Heike 239
  - ✓ Stella 244
  - ✓ Penny 252

- ✓ Phenyo 256
- ✓ Jesse 260
- ✓ Kate 270

TABLE and FIGURES

Table 1	Summary of the IOM's 2010 Statistics on Migration	12
Fig.1	From Veronica Lawler (1995:32-33), I was dreaming to come to America. Memories from the Ellis Island Oral History Project.	61
Fig. 2	Categories of Migration	63
Fig. 3	Original Scaffolding of Research Methodology Components (Crotty 2010:9)	75
Fig. 4	Descriptions of Scaffolded Components	76
Fig. 5	Extended Scaffolding of Inquiry Choices	76
Fig. 6	Dynamics Among Data Collection, Management and Collection (Chang 2008:122)	97
Fig. 7	'Migration'	143

before ...

i left
i returned
i'm still dripping
with The In-Between
(Utrecht, April 2011)

When I started thinking about writing this work, my mind was much like a washing machine. Thoughts floated and tumbled past the window in the washing machine door, swishing and swirling in the soapsuds of ideas, memories and dreams. As a toddler my daughter, Bianca, had had a Pink Panther toy knitted for her by my mother. When I was able to separate her from her toy, she used to watch her Pink Panther tumble about in the washing machine and then sat under the washing line, unmoveable, until her Pink Panther was dry. She was inseparable from her object of security. I too have such objects: my books mostly. One of these books is a book by Edmund Husserl (1931) in which he describes his notion of the *epoché*. This book has lived in my bookcase since 1992, when our Biblical Studies professor told our class about the *epoché.* I realised at the start of pondering the possibility of this writing that I would like to use Husserl's idea of the *epoché* in a similar and yet slightly different way. Husserl's idea of the *epoché* was to start again; to get away from the Cartesian way of thinking, by not beginning with any discourse at all: to suspend all belief and put aside our ideas about what reality might be. Husserl challenges us to put our ideas in brackets and allow ourselves to think about things as being there in the way that they are there, without attaching any specification to them.

I would like to attempt this in my writing. Firstly, to use the idea of bracketing to hold the writing between that which went before the writing began and that which happened during as well as after the writing had begun. And secondly, to use Husserl's idea of bracketing to help me suspend belief: to make no assumptions about what I was going to find, but allow the process to speak it all.

Despite these two approaches, it still seems as if my way of writing any prose is to stare at the computer screen for a long time, hoping that through sheer will-power the words in my head will appear on the screen in a marvel of Gilbertian (of Gilbert and Sullivan-fame) eloquence. I am repeating this approach again: staring at the screen after my first, Husserl-inspired, burst of word-production. But unfortunately, nothing appears until I actually tap the keys on the computer keyboard. Also, no Gilbertian eloquence proudly dashes across the page like a team of wildebeest, unfettered and ready to stop only when some base instinct dictates. It is just me, the computer and the burning in my soul to tell the stories of pain and victory which form part of moving - from one place to another and sometimes moving back - and the stuff that happens in-between the moving: the stories of peoples migrating.

Why do I want to tell these stories? The telling found me[1]. I did not go looking for it, but it found me. It found me during December 2010. I had come 'home' to South Africa for a holiday for the first time since leaving South Africa in February 2004 to work in the United Kingdom. I had come back to

[1] According to Jones (1990:176-177), 'Postmodernism celebrates the constructedness of accounts thus opening a gap for authors to legitimately reveal themselves in their work, to include our explicit subjective presence in our writing'.

South Africa once before, during this period, with the express purpose of nursing my daughter, Bianca, who had been involved in an accident. This visit was populated by doctors, hospitals, physiotherapists and worry about my child's recovery. It was a dash to and from the airport. This visit involved no real holidaying. My memory does not acknowledge this visit as a holiday, or, probably, as having even been in South Africa (Shotter 2003:132-137).

Reflection: I wonder what the effect of this last statement would be on the persons I interacted with during this visit? Would they agree with me that it had not been a holiday? Is this wondering even important within the scope of everyday life?

Back to December 2010. I arrived in South Africa on a Thursday for a six week-long stay. Our holiday plans included a family road trip to a game farm in Zambia, via Zimbabwe and Botswana and back home through Malawi and Mozambique. The excitement engendered by this trip was a life force to be reckoned with. But to attempt such a trip requires being prepared in so many different ways. One needs particular vaccinations, particular licences, particular disks on one's motor vehicle and particular paperwork for negotiating the various border posts we would encounter during the journey. In addition, we had to endure endless advice and superior grimaces from all 'who had been there and done that'

At the top of our list of priorities were the consumables needed to ensure survival. We, the intrepid explorers, were on our way to conquer deepest, darkest Africa, after all! It is with this sense of heightened excitement and exhilaration that we set off to a shopping mall on the Saturday prior to our departure on the Sunday. We were ready and willing to purchase the world to ensure a successful trip. My recollection is that we did a very good job at attempting this specific feat!

Reflection: I recall the various and numerous telephone calls, e-mails, mobile phone texts that crowded the ether whilst these arrangements were being put into place and I relive my sense of excitement about 'going home'! I recall the magnificent ease with which Bianca took control of all the arrangements. I recall being immensely proud of her, but also sad that she is now capable of organising, with such apparent ease, a trip into Africa and that she is no longer my baby girl, needing me for all things – the important ones as well as the not so important ones ...

On our way out of the shopping mall, the car loaded with purchases great and small, needed and not-so-needed, we stopped at a traffic intersection, like all responsible drivers do. There was a knock on the driver-side window and a man asked for a coin or two to enable him to buy food. I sit in my usual seat; in the back, behind the front passenger. I observe. My heart jumps. I am no longer used to this practice. In England such overt begging is discouraged. I recall the conversation that follows:
'*Hello, hoe gaan dit*?' (Hello, how are you?) to the man requesting money.
'I'm hungry, boss. Have you got something for me?'
'Here you are.' Some coins are handed over.
'*Hy is 'n Zimbabwean*' (He is a Zimbabwean), as a general statement after the car window had been closed to keep the summer heat out and the air conditioned cold in. An unchallenged assumption is made and accepted about this man's country of origin.
'*Hoe weet jy*?' (How do you know?)
'*Hy kan nie Afrikaans praat nie.*' (He can't speak Afrikaans.)

'*Ons moet eers vir ons eie mense gee.*' (We should give to our own people first.) This conversation hangs in the air conditioned interior of an upmarket four-by-four vehicle, especially purchased for the road trip into the interior of Africa. The distinction between the life-worlds of the actors in this mini-drama is tangible. The unspoken recognition of a witnessed injustice clung like a film of sweat on each body (Anderson & Schlunke 2008).

Reflection: Writing this paragraph; reading this paragraph, I recall the desolation I had felt on behalf of this man and I cry – again. Every time. I wonder whether he has someone to go home to? Does he have someone he can tell of his degradation and pain? Am I assuming that he is experiencing degradation and pain? I know what it felt like for me, back in England, and there I had everything going for me...

A few days after our return from our holiday, I am in the car with my niece. The same scenario replays itself. I re-experience the same excruciating pain I had experienced during that first Saturday outside the shopping mall, only this time it is compounded immeasurably. I know: *This is what it feels like to be a migrant*. I *know* the feeling. My mind recognises it. My body recognises it. I have been there – many times, *albeit* in different guises. The writing has found me. The question reverberates in my soul. Who is that man who knocked on the car window on Saturday afternoon *now*, at this time in his life, after having left his country of origin? Has he changed in his thinking about himself since he left his home of origin? Which kind of thoughts prevail when he thinks about himself *now*? How did he describe himself prior to leaving his home? What motivated him to leave his home? Would he describe himself as a beggar or as a survivor? Who *is* he? Who *are* all these people begging at the traffic intersections? The people begging include people whom have been pushed from Zimbabwe by the monstrous atrocities perpetrated upon them by the Mugabe-regime. Who *are* they now in their own minds? What were their descriptions and their thinking about themselves before they left their respective countries of origin? What are their dreams? Their hopes? Their desires?

Apart from Zimbabweans, there are many other people begging at the traffic intersections in South Africa: White South Africans; Black South Africans; Coloured South Africans; Mozambicans; peoples from across Africa. Each of these people stare blankly into the interior of any vehicle they beg at, seemingly disengaged from the begging. The question I ask myself pertains for each of them: '*Who* are *they now?*' What is the effect of migration – forced or unforced – upon each person's sense of who they *are*? Is there any kind of change in their sense of who they *are*? I want to ask myself and others these questions. As I typed the previous sentences, some words of self-description spontaneously sprung to the forefront of my mind: words like non-belonging, self-doubt, worthlessness, not-enoughness. These compound the knowing. I *have* to do this writing. I *have* to explore the embodied experiences of others about living outside of one's culture of origin. I *have* to. I *have* to. (Gergen 2009a). I ask these questions whilst being aware that I am taking an individualist stance during the asking. Yet, the asking remains .... Heshusius and Ballard (1996a:ix) remind me that knowing is not dispassionate; it is always personal. One will recognise the knowing in feeling and in reason and in its rightness.

Reflection: Now I am angry. Why do some people(s)/institutions/societies/ governments have the power to perpetrate such injustices over another sentient being? How come patriarchy is still alive and well and living in the world? I feel the adrenaline rushing through my veins and the internal shaking that takes over my body...

As I read through what I have written thus far, a niggling thought begins to plague me: Would the reader begin to suspect that the distress I experienced while witnessing the overt begging practises in South Africa was a result of the fact that I too had been driven to resort to begging habits in England? I find myself in a dilemma as to how to relate what I found so difficult about living in England. I am adamant about not going down the 'poor old me-route' during this dissertation; but if I relate those things which I experienced as particularly harsh in a dispassionate and matter of fact way, it might leave the reader thinking, "Well, what is so bad about that?" On re-reading the after…, I realise that it articulates the pain of living the in-between more clearly than a recitation of wrongs perpetrated against me ever could do. Every time I re-read the after …, I am reduced to tears and a re-living of the longings, the hurts, the pain of not belonging.

Perhaps one example will suffice. Approximately six weeks after starting my first job in England, the following incident occurred: Among many other men, a man of Indian extraction was being cared for in the hospital I was employed at. Peter[2] was about 45 years old at the time and suffered with what psychiatry terms 'severe chronic paranoid schizophrenia.' On this particular afternoon, he was scheduled for an hour of therapy with me. We had received extensive training on how to keep yourself safe when you work in a residential forensic mental health hospital. I kept all the safety measures in mind, when I allowed Peter to walk ahead of me into the therapy room. He was supposed to sit in the chair at the furthest point away from the door, so that I could be closest to the door: this would give me the fastest way out should I find myself in any kind of danger. It also gave the nurses the opportunity to get to me as soon as possible should I pull the alarm to indicate that I was in danger. Peter walked into the room ahead of me, as all patients/clients/service users are trained to do. I half-turned to close the door – a move which violated the safety practices I had been trained in. This gave Peter a chance to isolate me in the corner of the room behind the door, to pin me against the wall, attempt to remove my clothes, repeating to himself all the while: "The voices told me last night, in a dream, that if I slept with a white woman they would leave me alone forever." I was unable to pull the alarm as my hand could not get to it. I managed to remain icily calm, reassuring Peter all the while that we should speak about this dream and see how we could best find a way of dealing with the voices giving him these instructions. Eventually Peter stopped. I was able to dress myself and hold my torn clothing together whilst we spoke about this commanding voice and how he could possibly deal with it.

The next morning, at the Hospital's Morning Meeting where all the previous 24 hour's incidents are discussed, I informed the hospital psychiatrist of what had happened. His response was: "What do you expect? A pretty little immigrant psychologist like you? Of course he would want to sleep with you." That was the end of the matter as far as the psychiatrist was concerned. I was re-raped by three short sentences. Whereas the previous day I had ascribed my experience to the actions of a man as ill as Peter, the psychiatrist re-described them: he reminded me that I was different – an immigrant with no rights, a slave, a nothing, someone with no feelings worth recognising.

After writing the section about Peter, I have had to pause: my being has been flooded by so many incidents I had imagined that I had dealt with and buried. But then I remember the phrase I used so often whilst living in England. I say it out loud: "I can cope. I am a strong African woman." As always, this sentence helps to centre me and allows me to continue the writing. Now the passionate 'I *have* to' turns into an equally passionate: '*How*?' My brain shuts down. I notice sticky spots on my

[2] Pseudonym

computer's screen. They *have* to be cleaned this instant. I shut my computer down. The spots are meticulously and obsessively cleaned - over and over and over and over again and again. The *How?* hounds me, becoming more and more overpowering with every wipe of the cloth. And, as if to make sure, I wipe one last time. The next morning I wake up in the throes of a majestic migraine. The *How*? stands before me like a demon – part fear and part migraine's aura. I am out of commission for that day and that night. The following morning, when the migraine's zombiness still hangs over me, I decide that *this* is the morning that I need to sew new curtains for my bedroom. The *How*? mocks me with every stitch.

OK, *How*?, I've had enough of you.' I throw my half-made curtains down, grab my tools of the trade (computer, spectacles, pens, highlighters, notebook, mobile phone for just in case and the reference book I am reading). I settle down to attack the *How*? In the fiercest possible way: to shut its whiney mouth once and for all.

'No, no, no, no!' Sticky spots on the outside of my computer. They *have* to be cleaned before I can conquer *How*?. No way can I even allow these sticky aberrations to deface my computer for even one second longer. It just ain't happening. I spray the grime remover and smell the caustic smell, feeling sorry for my computer for putting it through the pain of such harsh treatment, easing my conscience by telling it that it will feel better once it's clean. I gently rub at the sticky spots. No movement. I rub harder. More grime remover. More chemicals up my nose and in my eyes but, still no sticky spot movement. I grab the scourer – gently at first. No movement. Now I scrub with dedication and not so gently anymore. Am I cleaning my computer or am I trying to erase *How*? I can't really tell, but the physical action of erasing something feels so good. Even with the caustic smell of the grime buster burning my nose. My world shrinks into the size of one grimy spot at a time and it is manageable. One spot at a time, the world is conquered; for now. I am big, I am strong, I am in control. 'If I can carry the scars of life, so can you, my computer. We are in this together.' I am still wondering, though, how the spots got to be there in the first place?

Reflection: I fondly recall, half-smiling, a friend often saying that he always knows when my head is in a mess – I clean and tidy obsessively...

The sticky spots have been conquered – well, mostly - so back to the *How*?. And the stuckness. In my head I hear the voices of my internal advisor and my external advisor: 'Just write one sentence at a time. You DO know what you are doing. Just write.' Do I? Maybe if I read just one more book; just one more article, the words will flow.

I read The Ethnographic I (Ellis 2004). I imbibe every word: my DNA bursts with the fullness of the text. The text bursts with the fullness of underlined words, sentences, passages, paragraphs, comments, blue high-lighter. The book's spine bursts too as I bend it one more time for even easier access to the words which are – for this moment – going to save me. The cover is tattered and torn. Since its purchase it has been in every imaginable bag and has accompanied me on every one of my journeys, great and small. The journey started in London and included Utrecht and Geneva, Detroit Airport during a 10 hour-long delay, Ottawa, Calgary and Addis Ababa. In Pretoria I clung to it like a security blanket: I even took it to the corner shop when I went for a walk to buy milk. Last night I read the last page. 'No, this can't be.' I clutch the book to my breast for the longest time, refusing

to let go, wishing for a process of osmosis to imprint the words on my brain. Eventually I let go. I put her down. I switch the light off, begging for the sweet arms of Morpheus ...

During the night Sisyphus (Camus 1991:1-124) had come for a visit, kindly leaving me his boulder by my bedside. Now I am the one expected to get the boulder over the mountain. This is a big ask as I can't even get it moving. Not even a fraction of an inch. I look up from the pushing. My eyes fall on a book. I abandon the pushing. I open the book and read the inscription:

28-05-11
M,
Here's to a future of changing the world in whatever way we can!
Much love
Dom
x

I am inspired. This wonderful young woman, Dom, is contributing daily to changing the world around her simply by being in it. Before I left London she and I shared many rich conversations about her work, my work, and the world in general. She left a book and a card, beautifully bound by an organza ribbon, on my case as a 'goodbye and good luck' gift. I found the book when I went to collect my baggage to leave for Heathrow to start my journey to South Africa and the arms of my people. More about that in **after ...**

'Margot, you have to read *Half the Sky* (Kristof & WuDunn 2010).'
'I will. I promise. After I've read everything else I have to read.'
'No. Now. It's inspirational. These women are inspirational.' Dom is sitting across from me at a small table in coffee shop in the middle of a walk-way in a busy mall in Wimbledon, her face and eyes serious. The sounds of the mall pale into insignificance when compared to her insistence. She is right. I opened the book this morning, saw her inscription and perused the content. I become absorbed by the chapter titles and sample some of the words. Yes, I *am* truly inspired. Dom was right.

I have managed to move the boulder one iota. I am ready now to consider how I should go on together with this work. The writing has become personified. I have a relationship with it. It has now become The Writing. It has a name ...

I reflect on the graphic I make use of at the start of each chapter and I realise that the reader would possibly prefer to know at the start of the reading why I chose this specific etching to form the pictorial metaphor to the writing. This graphic reminds me of what it is that I am actually writing about – The In-between. The being stuck in the middle. The not belong either here nor there. The graphic speaks to me of neither a definite going into the cave or a definite coming out of the cave. An In-betweeness which can be interpreted in a different or same way by everyone who looks at this particular lithograph etching. I name the etching '*the in-between*'. The story behind the graphic is as follows:

the in-between: It's my second last weekend in England. My friend Kate invites me to her Uncle Joe's 70th birthday party on the family farm where he has continued the stained glass studio (The Studio, Piggot's Hill near High Wycombe in Buckinghamshire) which his father started so many years ago. About 150 family members and I attend his birthday party. He tells us that he is now preparing

for an exhibition of some new work he has started – lithograph etching. Kate takes me on a tour of his studio. I look around in a rather perfunctorily way. Suddenly my eyes rest on the art reproduced at the start of each chapter. It kicks me in the chest like only art that truly 'speaks' to you can do. To me it speaks the representation of what my writing is about – the coming or the going unclear, undefined, ongoing. The etching gnaws at the periphery of my mind all through the course of the party and haunts my dreams during all of that night. On Sunday morning Kate takes me back to Uncle Joe's house to ask him whether he would sell me the etching. I explain why I would like to own '*the in-between*'. To him my wanting seems a special compliment. It is the first of his etchings he has sold…

If I find it necessary to clarify at the outset of the writing why I chose to use '*the in-between*' to grace the start of each chapter, I feel committed to similarly explain why it is that I chose to use the quotes by Thich Nhat Hanh to introduce each chapter. Thây, as he is known by his followers, is a Vietnamese Zen Buddhist monk, author, teacher, poet and peace activist. Thây was exiled from Vietnam for many years due to the Vietnamese government's displeasure at his work towards peaceful resolutions to the war in Vietnam. Many dark times prevailed for me during my stay in England, especially when my husband, Tielman, had to return to South Africa during the financial depression in England. A friend of mine, Gita, introduced me to Thây's writings when she first visited me in England. Reading Thây's work proved a life saving measure for me. When the days were dark and the nights were darker and as lonely as one could only imagine when you lived in a basement flat where the sun never showed its rays and the cold and wet clung to the walls in ways that had mushrooms growing from the ceilings and walls, reading Thây's work provided me with the will to carry on and to remain sure of more helpful ways of being. I find that it would be utterly disrespectful of me not to include him in this writing in a very visible way. He did save my life on many dark and dank occasions …

CHAPTER ONE

Hopes, Dreams and Desires

"My actions are my only true belongings.
I cannot escape the consequences of my actions.
My actions are the ground on which I stand."
— Thich Nhat Hanh
(*Understanding Our Mind:*
***50 verses on Buddhist Psychology*)**

A. INTRODUCTION

Culture, migration, identity? My current understanding about culture, migration and identity is infused with a perception about the loaded quality of these words. Each are filled with a conglomeration of meanings and experiences; quite possibly migration is the only one which is open to a measure of definition. The ideas surrounding culture and identity often have a sense of the ephemeral about them – there, just there, but also just out of reach. They are words that are loaded with various possibilities of interpretation and applicability to a certain description or way of thinking. Cohen and Jónsson (2011:xxvi) lend weight to the latter with their statement that 'we have only seen the beginning of a cultural focus on migration studies, which demography, sociology, human geography and, more recently, economics have commandeered'.

On to the more academic aspects of this writing. This writing takes the format of an academic work - an academic work written in an Auto Ethnographic style (later to be referred to as a Relational Ethnographic style – please see Chapter Four below), whilst using a Narrative Inquiry methodology to tease out the themes scattered within the conversations between the storytellers and I. This writing endeavours to inquire into my experience of migration, along with the experiences of eleven other migrants who shared their migratory experiences so generously with me. Moreover, it attempts to inquire into my rather bounded, individualistic and deterministic notion of how I have come to view myself since having been mauled by 'the system' of migration. It tries to make some sense of the notions of migration, culture and identity (a term much used by everyone - and ratified by psychology - to describe and root themselves). When all of the above is complete, one might be left with two very important questions: '*So what*?' and '*Who cares*?' During the course of this chapter, I will endeavour to answer these two significant questions: '*So what*?' and '*Who cares*?' by laying bare my hopes, dreams and desires for this study, I might come closer to moving towards a resolution of those two questions that have haunted each attempt to write a document with any academic inclination. Perhaps the one might ensue in answering the other? But before moving onto the 'So what? and Who cares?' questions, I wonder whether a sketch about *A Day in London* might situate the writing firmly within the parlance with a little frown on the forehead about difference and acceptance…

A Day in London

It is 05:30 on Thursday, 20th October 2011. I am at Geneva Airport, waiting to enplane for London Gatwick Airport on an EazyJet flight which leaves at 06:15. An inalienable, universal, categorical and empirical TRUTH is that should my name be on any airline's passenger list, the airplane will at best be late in arriving or departing and at worst, be cancelled. It is how it is. I have come to accept the *status quo*. Drat. This one is on time. There goes my TRUTH. We leave at exactly 06:15 on Thursday, 20th October 2011 for London Gatwick Airport. To further distress me, we arrive on time at London Gatwick Airport: 06:15.

Once again, I am acting against the norm, but quite in form for me, at least. I am flying from Geneva to do banking in London. Does this not usually happen the other way round? Oh well, it is what it is. I am, for the present, residing in South Africa. All the banking I have done from there since my arrival at the end of May 2011, on my UK bank account, has happened via Internet Banking. Until about two weeks ago. They changed the Bank's website and its workings. I have to take in to a branch of my bank the relevant identification to be able to do an international transfer. So be it. Good enough excuse for a little visit to Kate in Geneva and to good old London, old chap!

In addition to my banking business, I have to obtain an International Driver's Licence (IDL) from the Post Office at Trafalgar Square. The latter being necessary for my proposed trip to the USA. According to the International Automobile Association (IAA), one can only acquire an IDL from the country where your driving licence was first issued. I can obtain this from Her Majesty's, Queen Elizabeth II, Post Office at Trafalgar Square.

I arrive at Victoria Station, London, via the Gatwick Express Train. Victoria Station is teeming, but just a tad more so than usual. All the entrances to the Underground are blocked off. Sirens wailing. People milling and screaming and shouting in a most disorderly fashion. How very unBritish. Ambulances, firemen, station personnel running here, there and everywhere, trying to maintain order. Soothing, telling, informing, standing strong in the face of the British public. Someone on the tracks. Fatal. Can't say when it will be up and running again. 'Pardon, madam, we are most terribly sorry, really, for this dreadful inconvenience'. The bus station and taxi rank outside the station building is overrun. I walk for about two miles, eventually boarding a bus close to Hyde Park, which will take me to Trafalgar square. Rather annoyed, really, but keeping the stiff upper lip as it behoves a good Brit. I also want to go to the Museum of London. I never got to do this during the nigh on ten years I lived in the UK. I also did not visit Windsor. Will I ever again be able to? Wistfully, I bat that thought away for now, just a tiny sniff of something depression-like lingering.

Yet, London has welcomed me in its own inimical way – chaos reigns. I drink it in along with a sense of irritation. How dare it do this to me? Me? Its greatest ally on the whole of the African continent. Oh, well, whatever. I actually enjoy the bus ride, reconnecting with London. I suppress the enjoyment just a little bit. How can one enjoy anything when your life has been disrupted by a fatality? That would be so terribly unBritish, really – I mean, to actually overtly *show* enjoyment.

I get to Trafalgar Square. I decide there and then to have lunch/brunch/breakfast at St. Martin's in the Field. One decision down, a few to go for the day. Shall I stay the night, or not? I decide to let the day decide about that. I get to the Post Office. I stand in the queue in an orderly fashion. I am a well-acculturated Brit, after all. I do not queue, under *any* circumstances, in a disorderly fashion. I have also perfected the disdainful glare and sneer at anyone who should dare to do so, irrespective of their personal cultural habits. 'Sorry, Madam, you do not have the original paper counterpart to your Driver's Licence. We cannot issue you with an IDL without all your paperwork being presented.' All very civil; very proper. So be it. One down the mire, a few to go for the day.

I arrive at the branch of my Bank on The Strand. I am welcomed to the branch by a very smart lady who asks for my bank card and subsequently starts picking, one by one, at the keys of the computer with her *very* long, sculpted nails. She says: 'Hello, Anna, welcome to our branch', very loudly and very publicly. **I HATE BEING CALLED ANNA**. I tell her I prefer to be called Margot. 'Don't worry, Anna, we will see to you soon. What is it you need exactly, Anna?' I tell her. She tells me to wait. I wait, only covertly impatient. I am a good Brit, you see? After one and one quarter hour I am shown into an office, the whole time of my waiting being very loudly and publicly assured by the Effective Welcomer: 'Don't worry, Anna, we will be with you soon'. In the office I am asked again what it is they can assist me with. I explain, again. I am told to wait just a minute, again. The whole branch is staffed by persons of Jamaican extract. It is all very loud and very public. The Effective Welcomer calls across the banking hall into the office I am in: 'Come, Anna, David will help you.' I am helped by an apprentice. The process of doing one international transfer takes one hour and 20 minutes. Various people come to help him and go away from him again. Anna's business all along loudly being discussed across the banking hall for all to hear. Anna feels the daggered stares from the other customers waiting in line boring into Anna's back. Anna has been at that window for the longest time, has Anna not? And Anna commands all the employees, at regular intervals, to stand to attention to her transaction, does Anna not? Anna leaves the branch five and one quarter hours later, her business mostly completed. 'Goodbye, Anna, it was so nice to meet you.' Yeah, whatever.

I dive into the Crypt at St Martin's. I gorge on any possibility I can find that flies in the face of the food intolerance lifestyle I maintain – mostly. After eating, I am sated, but, oh, so very nauseous. But: Anna has been eaten back into her cage until

the next person wittingly or unwittingly rips Anna out. Anna reminds me of boarding school days. I ***hate*** the name Anna. I hate it much, much more than I hate heat, mosquitoes and blue flies and *that* is saying something …

After my gorging I decide to go back to Geneva. I have *so* had enough of London for one day. At London Gatwick Airport the very friendly and efficient young man gets me onto an earlier flight. I can leave almost immediately. Good man. No Museum of London. No Windsor. Enough is enough. Maybe another time…

B. ANSWERING THE 'SO WHAT - WHO CARES?' QUESTIONS

In answering the 'So what - Who cares?' questions, one is normally guided by a set of rather more specific criteria as to which aspects are normally considered important when (e)valuating (McNamee & Hosking 2012:81) a piece of academic work. It would seem that it would be a useful practice to make use of these guidelines to move closer to an answer to the 'So what - Who cares?' questions.

'…orienting research towards the meanings of migration for migrants themselves.'
Cohen & Jónsson (2011:xxiv)

1. Introductionary aspects, importance and limitations of the study

The first set of questions normally asked by the (e)valuators of any academic work, queries aspects such as whether an (i) introduction to the topic of the inquiry is present, whether an explanation of its (ii) importance to potential readers is explicated and why the researcher was drawn to the topic. Furthermore ,the (e)valuators, want to know how the topic has been dealt with in the (iii) past and what one would be able to (iv) draw from this inquiry. It is also important to know what the possible (v) limitations to the work might be.

i. The first bracket to this inquiry, **before…**, serves as an informal introduction to the work to be touched upon by the scope of this inquiry. **before…** introduces the reader to what it was that drew me so forcefully to the topic of migration. It invites the reader into sharing a part of my life that was significant in directing me towards the potentialities involved with migration in its day-to-day performance. It situates me within the inquiry, and surrounds me with the motivation to go unheeded into what it is that I might find in my quest to understand some of what might be layered under the guise of 'migration'.

ii. As an initial foretaste of the relevance (importance) of this work, which focuses primarily on migration, I would like to offer the following (statistical) information I accessed on the International Organization for Migration's website on 12 April 2012 (http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/about-migration/facts-and-figures/lang/en). Although the website cites figures from 2010 the information remains daunting nonetheless. I was confronted with the notion that such lists, as the one to follow, do not normally merit inclusion into a work of this nature. I oscillated for a protracted period of time between whether I should remove the list or not. I finally came to the conclusion that if I failed to include the list, a central part of the importance of the work around migration would be underestimated. I set about reading the list to get a measure of what the effect of such reading would entail. At first I was daunted by the denseness of the list. I was overcome by the enormity of the figures being quoted. I had the sense that I would be unable to absorb, or even read, the whole list. I came to the conclusion that if I, or any other reader even, picked any two of the bulleted points off the list at random, some sense would prevail of what modern human migration entailed. Migration has been with

us since the first humans left the Rift Valley in Kenya between 200,000 and 150,000 years ago and settled across the world as we know it now. But, at present migration seems to have become a social dilemma such as never recorded before. It is with this in mind that I include this list, for your information. Select, if you wish, one or two of the points made, or endeavor to consume the whole.

International Organization for Migration (IOM) - FACTS AND FIGURES
☒ The IOM claims an estimated number of 214 million international migrants world-wide.
☒ The total number of international migrants has increased over the last 10 years from an estimated 150 million in 2000 to 214 million persons today.
☒ 3.1% of the world's population are migrants. In other words, one of out of every 33 persons in the world today is a migrant (whereas in 2000 one out of every 35 persons was a migrant).
☒ The percentage of migrants has remained relatively stable as a share of the total population, increasing by only 0.2% (from 2.9% to 3.1%), over the last decade.
☒ Migrants would constitute the fifth most populous country in the world – equal in size to Brazil.
☒ Migration is now more widely distributed across more countries. Today the top 10 countries of destination receive a smaller share of all migrants than in 2000.
☒ 49% of migrants worldwide are women.
☒ USD440 billion estimated remittances (funds sent by migrants back to their countries of origin) were spent by migrants in 2010.
☒ Remittances have increased exponentially. From USD132 billion in 2000 to an estimated USD440 billion in 2010, even taking into account a slight decline due to the current economic crisis.
☒ The actual amount, including unrecorded flows through formal and informal channels, is believed to be significantly larger.
☒ In 2010, the top recipient countries of recorded remittances were India, China, Mexico, the Philippines, and France.
☒ Rich countries are the main originating source of remittances. The United States is by far the largest, with USD48.3 billion in recorded outward flows in 2009. Saudi Arabia ranks as the second largest, followed by Switzerland and Russia.
☒ USD325 billion estimated remittances sent by migrants to developing countries in 2010**.**
☒ 27.5 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the world in 2010. (For terminological clarification, please see Chapter Five below.)
☒ IDP numbers have grown from 21 million in 2000 to 27.5 million at the end of 2010.
☒ 15.4 million refugees reside across the world at present.
☒ Based on data from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the number of refugees stood at 15.4 million in 2010 compared to 15.9 million in 2000 – a decline of around 500,000. However, due to a change in classification and estimation methodology in a number of countries, figures from 2007 are not fully comparable with pre-2007 figures.
☒ The proportion of refugees in migrant stocks (migrants whom are already settled in a destination country) has fallen from 8.8% in 2000 to 7.6% in 2010.

Table 1. Summary of the IOM's statistics on migration.

In my search for scholarly articles and academic literature, I have failed to obtain any work that takes a particular interest in the stories and experiences of migrants of whichever designation (for designations please see Chapter Five below). Brettell (2008:114) concurs:

> …theorizing about migration has been shaped by a particular epistemology that generates a specific set of questions….These questions have focused less on the broad scope of migration flows than on the articulation between the place whence a migrant originates and the place or places to which he or she goes. This includes exploration of how people in local places respond to global processes. Equally anthropologists focus on culture.

I have found various instances on the internet where organisations and individuals have created opportunities for migrant stories to be told. These websites do not seem to be supported by any particular academic underpinning. Koser (2007:46) states clearly that not enough attention has been paid to the difficulties encountered through the separation of migrants from their families at home, sometimes for long periods of time.

iii. Another question that arises when discussing the merits of an inquiry is whether the inquirer has adequately excavated the territory to unearth how the topic at hand – in this case, migration – has been dealt with in the past. Hopefully this unearthing and excavation will be dealt with adequately during Chapter Five, which addresses the notions central to this inquiry, namely migration, culture and identity. This inquiry, though, does not endeavour to mine the corpus of literature regarding the statistics surrounding migration. Note is taken that much of the research on migration focuses on statistics about the environment, political significance and financial implications.

iv. Another question to be answered within the scope of this paper is about what I wished to draw from completing this inquiry. As stated before, my initial motivation was to embark on a journey that would take me from a place of where I had been cast into a black hole of despair by the injustices perpetrated against me to a place of understanding and healing. Initially, all my other hopes, dreams and desires for the inquiry were secondary to this overriding impetus. But subsequently, this principal drive has become rather ancillary. My hope has evolved into aspirations of effecting change for those whom I might help to walk on a path of rebuilding their ideas about themselves and their circumstances. I had ideas about wanting to find out whether our sense of 'identity' or self(?) is affected by what happens to us as migrants and during times of discrimination. I wanted to find more questions to ask of myself and others. I wanted to find out whether talking and thinking and writing about migration is a needed topic. I wanted to find out whether I could uncover other possible topics to inquire. But, most importantly, I now know, I wanted to inform myself so that I could be better prepared to work with those migrants who have no other resources and need to be attended to above everyone else. I *know* that I will go from this inquiry better equipped to assist those who beg at street corners and shopping malls, as they have no other options available to them. I have found my activist heart. It has been returned to me. This writing has given me back who I am. This is what I will take away with a sense of profound gratitude. I will put my gratitude into action. My action will comprise unrelenting action on behalf of those who have no services and no support. I wanted to enlighten myself so that I could write and speak about migration in an informed manner. I want to write a popular book on migration so that more persons might be informed about the agonies and the ecstasies of migration. And … I wanted the authorities to *know* that migrants are more than mere statistics. They are people – above all else – and they each have a story to tell.

v. Each inquiry inhabits certain limitations. This inquiry is no different. Its most apparent limitation is the scope of the work. Time and capacity limitations seem to present the most glaringly obvious restrictions. A man begging to enable him to feed himself drew me to the work, yet I have not interviewed any such person during this inquiry. During Chapter Four (The How), I discuss the ethical matters I considered for the purposes of engaging with this work. I state there that I did not feel entitled to speak with persons about situations, which could potentially be distressing to them, without also being able to offer them the support of any follow-up conversations or other support services. Follow-up conversations would not have been possible for me within the time and place remit available to me. In South Africa, support services for migrants are non-existent. My conversations with the IOM in Hatfield, Pretoria, proved hugely unsatisfactory. My interactions with the Centre for Migration at Unisa, Pretoria, informed me that they were also in the process of inquiring into setting up support services for irregular migrants, especially those originating from Zimbabwe. This particular inquiry only includes persons who are employed (Jesse on a part-time basis only), adequately housed, adequately fed

and adequately clothed: it thus does not include a large portion of those migrants that populate the modern world. I did not have the opportunity to have face-to-face conversations with many of the storytellers or follow-up conversations with any of the storytellers. All the storytellers are educated and have a command of English, except Alina who does not speak English. In retrospect, I acknowledge that it probably would have been more beneficial if I had concentrated on the stories of one or two other storytellers, along with my own. I have contemplated the pros and cons of having included so many conversations, especially as I was consistently infused by a sense of not having paid adequate attention to any one of the conversations. If I had to redo the inquiry, I am certain that I would ask different questions. But at the time of the asking, the questions made perfect sense. After collating the conversations and the intensive interaction with the material included in and consulted for the inquiry, I am overcome by all the other possible conversations I could have engaged with. If one considers the number of migrants in the world, speaking with 12 migrants hardly seems to make for a relevant inquiry. Yet, I am heartened by knowing that the world is changed one conversation at a time. I know that in my immediate circle many people think very differently about migration since I started working with the ideas about migration. I know that I think differently about migration…

2. What I hope to learn

The second set of questions the inquirer wants to be able to answer by means of an inquiry, is normally an account of how and what the writer hopes to learn by conducting this inquiry. In addition, (e)valuators ask questions regarding how important the work is to the inquirer.

This question seems largely to have been answered during my discussion about what I wished to draw from the inquiry, as well as during the consideration of the inquiry's limitations. As a Narrative Practitioner, I am intimately bound to stories and questions, and the possibilities they open up when we engage in generative dialogues. I am currently in the process of rereading the whole of the same copy of *Narrative Therapy. The Social Construction of Preferred Realities* (Freedman & Combs 1996) for the seventh time. Quite a few sections of my copy are hardly legible at this stage: the description 'tattered and torn' springs to mind, but in a good way. I am, again, as enthused by the possibilities of what this book presents, as I was the first time I came into contact with it during 1998. I am enthused by the possibilities opened up by writing this inquiry. When I consider the combination of Narrative Therapy and the information gained from the journey of this inquiry, the relocating of my activist heart and my dedication to Appreciative Inquiry, I have a *knowing* that this inquiry is the start of a journey of migration - one that is of a very different nature and outcome from my original journey. The migratory journey now will be a journey of finding options, possibilities and exchanges that open up ways for the authorities to consider other routes for getting to more useful and preferable situations for all concerned. In addition, it has inspired me to activate for support structures for migrants. I know that I will *never* again be without the picture of that man we encountered that Saturday morning at the traffic intersection outside the Menlyn Shopping Mall…

3. Addressing Social Constructionist ideas

(E)valuators of an inquiry based on Social Constructionist ideas want to be clear that the inquirer is able to explain how Social Constructionist ideas inform the topic. How do Social Constructionist ideas open new ways of understanding or approaching the topic, or address some of the limitations of preceding inquiries?

Chapter Three is dedicated to the discussion of Social Constructionist ideas. It considers the entwined epistemological/ontological nuances underpinning Social Construction, takes an abridged look at some theorists who may be considered to be forerunners of Social Construction, contemplates the main tenets of Social Construction, and offers a short discussion on possible criticisms of Social Construction. Chapter Three also informs the reader how I use Social Constructionist ideas to understand the phenomenon of modern human migration. This latter topic

is further addressed in the ***Reflections*** I offer after collating snippets from the answers to the questions posed during the conversation with each of the storytellers. Chapter Three touches upon new ways of approaching and understanding the subject of migration.

4. Literary Inquiry

Questions about whether relevant references - pertaining both to Social Construction and other more traditional approaches - to academic and other texts were used and referenced, comprise relevant criteria for (e)valuating an inquiry. It is furthermore important to ascertain whether the inquiry links topics in scholarship to practices in the world.

This inquiry is permeated by references pertaining to the main topics under discussion: namely, Social Construction, Auto (Relational) Ethnography, Narrative Inquiry, migration, culture, identity, Postmodernism, Poststructuralism, Foucault, Derrida, language, stories, Narrative Therapy, power, patriarchy, feminism, ethics, Positioning Theory. Also included are those references pertaining to the specific authors cited, as well as those more traditional theories which relate to Social Construction. It has been my explicit intention to link the theoretical stances taken and observations made during the inquiry to practical, day-to-day examples. Chapter Six – Conversations - is an effective illustration of this process. I have used the ***Reflections*** I offered after each of the collated answers to the questions as a practical way to link theory to practice by illustrating the themes forthcoming from the conversations with relevant examples and explanations from literature. Chapter Seven – Conclusions - addresses this process in greater detail; it systematically and meticulously attends to the particularities central to each of the topics and their associations to Social Construction.

5. Organisation of the inquiry

It is necessary to describe how the inquirer plans to go about the inquiry and to include in this description how the inquirer plans to organise the final written report.

Chapter Five - The How - offers a step-by-step description of the methodological aspects of the inquiry. This chapter discusses the background to the inquiry, the aims and questions guiding the inquiry, along with an extended contemplation of why I made the methodological choices I finally used for the purposes of this inquiry. This inquiry report is organised in the following way:

before… provides a glimpse into the background to the study and is informed by the ideas Edmund Husserl proposed about the *epoché* and how that suspends belief. As explained at the outset in **before…**, I have taken journalistic freedom to use Husserl's idea to bracket my writing between two pieces of personal narrative and thus to situate the writing in a style more in keeping with Auto (Relational) Ethnography.

The current chapter - Chapter One: Hopes, Dreams and Desires - is an attempt to answer the 'So What – Who Cares?' questions that direct each inquiry in its entirety.

Chapter Two explicates my understanding of Feminism and Postmodernism and of how these two philosophical ways of thinking cohere and contribute to the context of this inquiry. I also include a short section on the links between Postmodernism and Poststructuralism. Michel Foucault's notion about power/knowledge and its link to patriarchy is discussed in some detail. An attempt to elucidate Jacques Derrida's notions on deconstruction and on how the ideas about deconstruction connect with Social Construction forms an important part of this chapter.

The interconnection between Epistemological Considerations – the nature of knowledge and its possibilities (the '*What it means to know'*) - and the Ontological Considerations underpinning Social Construction forms the main considerations of Chapter Three. These considerations include the endeavour to explain how I understand Social Construction and how Social Construction informs and directs the writing of this inquiry. This chapter explores very succinctly the early historical influences

to Social Constructionism. It also considers some of the criticisms against Social Construction, for instance Radical Relativism, Individualism and Nihilism. The chapter is interspersed with personal reflections and examples pertaining to daily life.

Chapter Four - Culture, Migration and Identity - will be a reflection of what the literature has to offer regarding the main theories used during the writing of this inquiry narrative. During the course of this chapter, I will attempt to articulate workable definitions of culture, migration, and relational identity. I will endeavour to offer suggestions of how these theories link with Social Construction and how Social Construction may offer a possible way of working with these terminologies in the future.

Chapter Five – The How - explains my rationale for choosing a polymethod inquiry design: mainly, Narrative Inquiry, along with aspects of Auto (Relational) Ethnography. Auto (Relational) Ethnography and Narrative Inquiry will help to make sense of the information offered to me during the course of this inquiry. Also included in this chapter are descriptions of Auto (Relational) Ethnography and Narrative Inquiry, along with a step-by-step plan of the concrete techniques and procedures I propose to use during the course of the writing. Narrative Inquiry will be discussed at length, as will an offering on the possibility of moving from Auto Ethnography as a term to Relational Ethnography as a preferred term, as suggested by Gail Simon (2011).

Chapter Six - Conversations - will encapsulate thematic excerpts from the conversations shared with the participants to the inquiry and will attempt to make the themes inherent in these conversations visible by making use of Narrative Inquiry. My own story, from my personal migratory experience, forms part of this chapter. A third component - ***Reflections*** - forms an important part of this chapter. These ***Reflections*** are informed by literature and reflect both on the participants' experiences and my personal experiences.

Finally, during Chapter Seven- Conclusions - I include thoughts on my experience of being part of Stories; on whether the aims and objectives of Stories were realistic; and on whether any helpful knowledges were contributed to the world at large. Chapter Seven will also question carefully whether the hopes, dreams and desires set forth during the course of Chapter One were achieved.

The dissertation ends with an epilogue-like description: **after...**. Like **before** …, it is written in a purely narrative style. It tells of my experiences and thoughts about leaving the UK, of arriving and re-residing in South Africa, of my sojourn in the USA and of my experience of writing this dissertation. Again, like **before…**, the **after…**bracket will be written using Husserl's notion of the *epoché* as a guiding principle.

6. Rationale supporting the inquiry, methodology and ethical issues

The questions pertaining to what the rationale to the inquiry is, why the inquirer selected a particular method and how the selected method is coherent with a Social Constructionist orientation need consideration. The ethical issues inherent to the inquiry are a pertinent point to be discussed.

Chapter Five – The How - explains in detail my rationale for the inquiry: why I elected to use Auto (Relational) Ethnography and Narrative Inquiry and how these methodologies cohere with Social Construction. Before embarking on the writing of this work, I was often demonized by the question surrounding the ethicality of engaging in interviews with persons with whom I could not have face-to-face conversations. The logistical constraints surrounding the topic of migration seem to prohibit face-to-face conversations. I was offered many solutions to my quandary, such as: 'Why not do Skype conversations?' Many areas in South Africa would make it quite impossible to establish a Skype connection that would allow me to maintain a respectful and unbroken conversation with

someone. I found myself in exactly such an area at the time when the interviews were to take place. Financially it was more than prohibitive to jet across the world to speak to persons in all the countries represented by this writing (although, as a travel addict, I would have much preferred that option!)

In Chapter Five, I discuss, at length, all the other ethical considerations I took into account during the course of this inquiry. By no means do I lay claim to the possibility that these ethical considerations are exhaustive: I am aware that the discerning reader might be able to furnish me with other considerations I did not note. Suffice it to say at this juncture that my ethical considerations were unfailingly informed by a premise to do no harm. Fontana and Frey (2005:715-716) note that three ethical aspects should specially be considered when engaging with interviews: informed consent, right to privacy and protection from harm. I have endeavoured to abide by all three these criteria, along with their implicative nuances, as well as to attend to any situational ethical considerations that might have emerged during my work. For example, I checked with one of the storytellers whether s/he would prefer that I did not disclose all of the horrors s/he had lived through with her/his family as this would have involved disclosing information about certain family members which I had no prior permission to do. As a feminist writer, I find it important that the values of those persons who entrust me with their stories are kept intact. It was, again, my true intention that this remains the case.

7. Applicability of the work

(E)valuators consider whether the inquirer has adequately accounted for the applicability of the work to the world in general. How does this work inform or invite practices in the world? What can others use in this work; what can they learn? What might you do next if you were to continue inquiry into this topic? What might you suggest as useful and generative projects for others?

Chapter Seven – Conclusions - endeavours to assess how applicable the knowledges gained from this inquiry are to the world in general. I am predominantly concerned with how this inquiry might open up dialogues and possibilities for other kinds of conversations across the world. I am overwhelmed by how little is done in the so-called First World countries to support and accommodate the migrants they draw in their tens of thousands each year. I am overwhelmed by how migrants are treated as statistics and not as people. The latter has become a rather repetitive mantra for me. I have a dream, a hope and a desire that this work might motivate someone to engage in practices other than those that have been ongoing until this day. I am concerned about those world organisations which seem to have lost their vision and mission within their size and power base. If I am to continue this work – and I *am* – I am committed, in whatever society I find myself, to engage with two practices in particular: (1) to engage in dialogues with key role players to work towards structures and systems that offer support to migrants, and (2) to make the plight of migrants visible. The image of the man at the traffic light acts as my guiding vision…

Various questions arise from this inquiry. Some of the questions that have arisen for me are stated below. I am aware that readers will be able to add to the list of possibilities.

- How many people have left their homes for the purposes of migration and have never reached their intended destinations? What were their lives like in the transit countries where they eventually ended up?
- How can we address and encourage conversations about the grounds for irregular migration and the subsequent consequences of irregular migration in ways that may be generative and useful?
- Are there generative ways of going about opening conversations regarding the protracted refugee situations where refugees find themselves in long-lasting and intractable states of limbo?

- How may we make a difference in refugee camps in sustainable ways that offer the refugees hope and dignity? How can we go about the aforesaid in a way that includes the refugees in these conversations about their futures?

8. Accessibility to the work

An important question in Social Construction writing is about whether the writing is accessible to the lay public, but also to scholars.

I have tried my utmost to keep the writing accessible to the lay public. It has been my practice, from the start, to circulate my writing to non-scholars and to scholars of other disciplines. My family has acted as a rather captive readership. Their instructions throughout have been to evaluate the writing according to the following parameters: 'Do you understand what I am writing? Does the writing make sense to you? Do you want to read more?' I know that I have the tendency to fall into rather archaic and academic languaging. Much of this languaging is still remnants from my Law studies and my writing of so many psycho-legal/medical languaging-informed reports. I am hopeful that the more pop-psychology version of this work, which I am envisioning, will make the work accessible to an interested lay public. I am rather more concerned, at this point in time, whether the authorities regulating migration will find this particular inquiry report informative and influential.

C. CONCLUSION

It is fundamentally my hope, dream and desire that I may address the socially and culturally complex ideas of migration, culture and identity through the use of multiple perspectives, which is typical of postmodern inquiry, by means of this writing. I am hoping that the writing will do two things: on the one hand to engage in a kind of double movement by moving from a discussion of various theorists on various topics to applying these insights, acquired by perusing the works of these theorists, to a discussion of everyday experiences. It is my further hope that in going about my writing in this particular way, it may become accessible to and readable by many interested parties, both lay and professional. I am also hoping that during my engaging with acts of self(?)-reflection, I might stay in the here and now, whilst still allowing for a consideration of some, but hardly all, of the academic voices which demand to be heard where the topics under consideration are concerned. I apologies to those academic voices whom I have neglected in my writing, purely as the constraints of this writing excludes the inclusion of all. My hope is that this introduction has allowed the readers to be able to have a map of where this writing is on its way to and what my position, or my voice, constitutes during this writing. My desire is to capture the different facets of the stories I have been told along with my own stories. My dream is that I might succeed in my quest…

CHAPTER TWO

Postmodern and Feminist Thinking

"Our own life has to be our message."
— Thich Nhat Hanh
(The World We Have: A Buddhist Approach To Peace and Ecology)

A. INTRODUCTION

During the subsequent sections of this chapter I will consider my own discursive positioning in this inquiry project. A Postmodern, Feminist and Social Construction position has guided me throughout: this has affected my methodological positioning, as well as my positioning within the conversations I have had with the participants - migrants from across the world who are speaking from various situational contexts in their respective lives. Postmodernism's 'no one Truth' notion; Feminism's ideas of non-subjugation and non-perpetration of others; and Social Construction's preferred way of relational going on together have informed my inquiry and have had a continuous bearing on my being.

B. POSTSTRUCTURALISM AND POSTMODERNISM

1. Different Strokes for Different Folks?

Before departing on the journey of considering Postmodernism, it might be helpful to the reader to outline briefly what an abridged cross-section of the literature regard as the differences, if any, between 'Poststructuralism' and 'Postmodernism'. The literature covering how Postmodernism came into being frequently mentions authors who are referred to as Poststructuralists and Postmodernists alike: for example, Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida. Meyerhoff and Visser (2010:2) refer to Michel Foucault as having a 'Poststructural phase', thus intimating that he then moved to a 'Postmodern phase':

> 'Poststructuralism' is one aspect of what may be a larger societal shift called 'Postmodernism.' Postmodernism is a new cultural, social and economic shift in Western societies in which fundamental aspects of the older modern world have changed to such a degree that a new historical world is upon us.

Smart (1993:21), Ward (2011) and Meyerhoff and Visser (2010) concur that Poststructuralism has contributed to the constitution of Postmodernism. How is it then, that the bridge is constructed from the one to the other by various authors, myself included (Brink 2004)?

1.1 A *Very* Brief Look at Poststructuralism

Meyerhoff and Visser (2010:1) describe Poststructuralism as "a broad term for a loose agglomeration of theorists and ideas which arose in the mid-sixties as a reaction to the prevailing intellectual approach of structuralism." Ward (2011:57) explains how Structuralism asks questions about where meaning originates: Does meaning come from the text itself? Does meaning come from the context in which the text is situated? Is the reader free to create his/her own meaning? Can the author control how the text is interpreted? Does the production of meaning arise from the interaction of these factors and if so, how exactly do they interact? Poststructuralism continues to ask these questions, but refrains from offering a single answer. Ward (2011:57) notes that the word 'Poststructuralism' implies that Poststructuralism simply took over from Structuralism at some point in time. He prefers to suppose that these two discourses ran alongside each other and often crossed

tracks – especially during the 1960's. He further states that Structuralism and Poststructuralism form much of the philosophical background of postmodern theory. Poststructuralism is often seen as Postmodern philosophy. According to Ward (2011:57), Postmodern philosophy unites the work of a rather diverse group of thinkers as situated within the Postmodernist discourse. It is interesting to note how many authors emphasise that none of these alleged 'Poststructuralist' or 'Postmodernist' theorists ever referred to themselves as belonging to either of these two groups.

A number of radical propositions are asserted by the Poststructural critique. These include:

> ….differing perspectives [that] are not reconcilable into some larger scheme; no unproblematic intellectual foundations validate knowledge-claims; the natural sciences offer no epistemological certainty; words themselves – the tools of thinking and writing – are not transparent windows on reality; our era's taken-for- granted humanism which places 'man' at the centre of all things is an intellectual and historical fiction; and meta-narratives, which attempt to describe the history of humanity or existence, crush differences and are exclusive while trumpeting integration and inclusion.
>
> (Meyerhoff & Visser 2010:2)

Although I will discuss Postmodernism at length in the following section of this chapter, it is necessary here to consider succinctly the aspects thought to be central to Postmodernism so as develop the case for the interlinking of these two discourses. Ward (1997:11-16) notes the following significant features of Postmodernism:

1. *Cultural flattening*: Postmodernism seeks to resist elitism – meanings and ideas flow through culture in ways that cannot be accounted for by a high/low model.
2. *Knowingness*: Postmodernism insists on "self-conscious, self-contradictory, self-undermining statements" (Ward 1997:12).
3. *Hybridization*: Postmodernism swaps purity for new combinations of genres, styles and media.
4. *Intertextuality*: Postmodernism continually alludes to, quotes and pays homage to other texts.
5. *Eclecticism*: Postmodernism brings aspects from disparate sources and materials together and reworks them into other contexts.
6. *Surface effects*: Postmodernism incorporates all aspects, including the arts, meaning, representation and language, whilst questioning their 'truth' status; it suggests that all is merely interpretation happening between interlocutors.
7. *Identity stimulation*: Postmodernism sees identity as continually being in the process of invention or becoming.

These latter aspects bring into stark relief the open-endedness and fluidity of Postmodernism. They are thus well-suited to act as a description of a new period of disillusionment with what had gone before, i.e., Modernity and Structuralism. The multiplication of the meanings constrained by the Enlightenment, Modernity and Structuralism acts as a metaphoric umbrella over what we describe as Postmodernism, whilst making space for Poststructuralism under this same umbrella. Ward's (2011:57) notion that Poststructuralism is often seen as Postmodern philosophy supports this metaphor.

1.2 Poststructuralism and Postmodernism – Comrades in Arms?

A summary of how Poststructuralism and Postmodernism may be viewed as different, but the same, could include the following: Poststructuralism rejects the theory that we can map the structure of a language or culture. Rather, meaning is constantly slipping from one sign/text to the next. As Derrida and Saussure would have it, signifiers do not produce signifieds; they merely produce a possibility to take meaning from the texts. Postmodernism denounces the Truth claims of both the

Church – as the all-knowing entity – and the Enlightenment, which replaced it. According to Postmodernism, what may be termed 'Truth' is socially constructed.

Grenz (1996:6, 121, 128), and Appignanesi and Garrat (2001:72-77) seem to agree with the above by inferring that a Poststructuralist would not take meaning to be inherent in a text itself. The text's meaning only arises when the reader enters into dialogue with the text, which in turn then allows the text to have as many meanings as it has readers. Grenz (1996:121), specifically, emphasises that Poststructuralists affirm the assumptions of the Postmodernists and that they 'know' only one thing: "the impossibility of knowing." He makes particular mention of Foucault as an author who moves us from the constituted boundary between Poststructuralism to Postmodernism. This allows us the freedom to surmise that the one idea, or theory, has flowed and merged into the other. We can thus speak of Postmodernism without the nagging doubt that describing an author as 'Postmodern' actually constitutes a misnomer.

Chris Butler (2002:3) urges us to keep in mind that those who are inclined towards a postmodern way of thinking "… have a distinct way of seeing the world as a whole, and use a set of philosophical ideas that not only support an aesthetic but also analyse a 'late capitalist' cultural condition of 'postmodernity'." He also reminds us that postmodernism strives to resist metanarratives - those grand narratives (discourses) which serve to legitimise and authorise the cultural and other practices operating in the world.

Belsey (2002:5) offers us a workable description of the distinctions and similarities between Postmodernism and Poststructuralism:

> Poststructuralism names a theory, or a group of theories, concerning the relationship between human beings, the world, and the practice of making and reproducing meanings. On the one hand, poststructuralists affirm, consciousness is not the origin of the language we speak and the images we recognise, so much as the product of the meaning we learn and reproduce. On the other hand, communication changes all the time, with or without intervention from us, and we choose to intervene with a view to altering the meanings – which is to say the norms and values – our culture takes for granted.

My reading of the above authors on the intertwined relationship between Poststructuralism and Postmodernism allows me comfortably to accept that the one informs the other in a dance of intricate steps. As these two discourses sit confidently under the same metaphorical umbrella, one can argue for the one or the other. For the purposes of this writing, I choose to argue that Postmodernism leans more towards Social Construction than towards Poststructuralism. My choice is particularly informed by the following five premises which Gergen (2009b:5-13) offers of Social Construction: (1) "*The way in which we understand the world is not required by 'what there is*'.". Words do not represent only one meaning or one Truth. (2) "*The way in which we describe and explain the world are the outcomes of relationship*." Words can be viewed as mirrors. How we use the words and how we go about our relationship with each other or with the words, will help us make meaning of those words. (3) "*Constructions gain their significance from their social utility*." Cultural traditions, for instance, gain their importance from the meanings we attribute to them. They become embedded within society by means of our repetition of them. (4) "*As we describe and explain, so do we fashion our future*." Language is a major ingredient of our worlds of action. Language fashions social life itself. For example, the words 'Mental Health Hospital' may evoke images portrayed by the film, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Should you thus be invited to visit a Mental Health Hospital, these are the images that you would expect. (5) "*Reflection on our taken-*

for-granted worlds is vital to our future well-being." Suspending our beliefs and our taken-for-granted knowledges allows us to consider other, possibly more appropriate, options.

2. Postmodernism

It is generally accepted that the philosophical foundation for modernism was laid by René Descartes' dictum, *cogito ergo sum* (I think therefore I am), which defined human nature as a thinking substance and the human person as a rational being. Isaac Newton provided the scientific structure for Cartesian philosophy by picturing the physical world as consisting of laws and regularities which could be discerned by the human mind. Jürgen Habermas' Enlightenment followed. Its purpose was to unlock the secrets of the universe in order to master nature for human benefit and create a better world, thus generating modernism's rational management of human life (Grenz 1996:2-3). Put simplistically, Postmodernism seems to be the undertaking to provide more options than those that the empiricists offer. It must be noted from the outset that the term 'Postmodern' initially referred to a time, including its arts and architecture, rather than an ideology (Dockery 1995:13).

Although the term Postmodernism may first have been coined in the 1930's to refer to a major historical shift already underway, it did not gain much academic attention until the 1970's when Jean-Francois Lyotard (Powell 1998:19-33) wrote *The post-modern condition: A report on knowledge*. At first Postmodernism ignited a new style of architecture and various forms of the arts (art *per se*, films, comics, television, etc.). Thereafter it moved on to the academic realm, and emerged eventually as the description for a broader cultural phenomenon. Postmodernism represents a challenge to the Enlightenment and the foundational assumptions upon which it was built (Grenz 1996:2-5).

The immediate intellectual impulse for the dismantling of the Enlightenment project came from the rise of deconstruction as a literary theory, which in turn influenced a new movement within philosophy. Writers such as Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida spearheaded this new movement. Their thinking evolved from the work of philosophers such as Nietzsche, Hegel, Heidegger, Wittgenstein, and others. Their main focus was on deconstructing conceptions of how we have understood the human thus far: to "dissolve the subject" whilst critiquing the metaphysics, the concepts of causality, of identity, of the subject and of all truth (Sarup 1993).

The movement from a Modern to a Postmodern discourse was also accompanied by a movement from a Structuralist to a Poststructuralist discourse (see above). Michael White (1997:22-235) writes that Postmodernist ideas ask the question: "What are we today?" This question informs the inquiry into how lives are constituted through the knowledges and practices of culture and how it is that the knowledge and practices of customs inform our ways of life and thought – thoughts about ourselves and about the world in general.

A vignette of the central notions of Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, whom many authors positions as Postmodernism's main proponents, follows to illustrate the confluence of Poststructuralism and Postmodernism

2.1. The Main Inceptors of the Postmodern Discourse

2.1.1 Focusing on Michel Foucault, Power, Knowledge and Patriarchy

> The history which bears and determines us has the form of a war rather than that of a language: relations of power, not relations of meaning. History has no "meaning", though that is not to say that it is absurd or incoherent.
>
> (Foucault 1977b:97)

> Each society has its regime of truth, its "general politics" of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true.
>
> (Foucault 1980:44-45)

Michel Foucault was born in Poitiers, France, on 15 October 1926. His family were wealthy French provincials. Michel is acknowledged to have had a close relationship with rebellion since an early age. This is evident from, among others, his educational record, his writings, the way he chose to conduct his sexual relationships and his various interpersonal relationships (Strathern 2002).

Michel Foucault was a prolific writer. His work includes: *Madness and Civilization: A history of insanity in the age of reason* (1967); *The birth of the clinic: An archaeology of medical perception* (1973); *The order of things: An archaeology of the human sciences* (1970); *The archaeology of knowledge* (1972); *Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison* (1977a); and the three volumes on the *History of sexuality* (1979, 1986, 1988) address mainly the power/knowledge issue which absorbed him so completely.

According to Strathern (2000:10), Michel Foucault was "feeling trapped" within the social structure created by shifting and contingent cultural forces. After studying Nietzsche, an experience he described as a "thunderbolt from heaven", he realised that he was free to create himself as he saw fit. Nietzsche's emphasis on the central role of power in all human activity and his expositions of "will to truth" and "will to power" played major roles in Foucault's thinking. Nietzsche's influence led to Foucault's postulation that Western society has believed three fundamental errors, namely: (1) that an objective body of knowledge exists and is waiting to be discovered; (2) that they actually possess such knowledge and that it is neutral and value-free; and (3) that the pursuit of knowledge benefits all humankind rather than just a specific class (Grenz 1996:131). It is important to note here that Michel Foucault did not only position himself as an exponent of the power wielded by certain discourses within society. This would limit what Foucault brought to the world through his prolific writing (Gutting 2005).

Foucault rejected the Enlightenment's claims by stating that because knowledge is embedded in the world, knowledge is involved in the power struggles that constitute our world. In this way, knowledge creates the discourses as we understand them. Discourse brings objects into being by identifying, specifying and defining them. The power of knowledge reveals itself in a discourse through which it randomly, and for its own purposes, engages in the invention of 'truth'. In this way, knowledge produces our reality (Gergen s.a.:29-49; Grenz 1996:124-133). Foucault is against any form of global theorizing. He wants to avoid totalising forms of analysis and is critical of matters that can be systematically explained (Sarup 1993:58). Foucault (in Gergen & Gergen 2003:49) suggests that the Church created a time "when the most singular pleasures were called upon to pronounce a discourse of truth concerning themselves, a discourse which had to model itself after that which spoke, not of sin and salvation, but of bodies in life processes – the discourse of science."

Foucault stresses that every version of reality is an assertion of power. Because 'knowledge' is always the result of the use of power, thus to name something is to exercise power over it and to thus violate what is named. Social institutions inevitably employ violence when they impose their own meaning on experience. Knowledge is always purposive: it is characterised by a will to dominate or appropriate. Knowledge is not some neutral abstract entity. Knowledge was sought for use: it was potent and unstable. Foucault recognised that the most significant aspect of power lay in social relationships. According to him power is involved in the production and use of knowledge. As long as the constructed truth works well, it will be accepted even though it may contain flaws, gaps

and contradictions. The shifts and negotiations of power create the spaces where discourses appear. Foucault stated that power and knowledge were so strongly related that they could not be used as separate terms but rather as 'power/knowledge'.

Foucault's objective was to find a new discourse that would enable one to take a stand outside of and against the truth claims of reason. His method involved tracing the 'genealogy' of a body of knowledge – that is, to observe how the concepts of a discipline or human science came to be constructed and then to disrupt or dismantle the knowledge and resultant power of the established discourse (Grenz 1996:135).

Foucault's influence will be hovering over me both as I make sense of the stories of migration entrusted to me by the migrants, as well as I think about my own experience. In many of these stories patriarchy exerts an almost tangible influence.

2.1.2 Patriarchy

Michel Foucault is often cited as having brought the notion of patriarchy to light, in particular through his profuse writings about power/knowledge (Foucault 1980). Whenever the notion of patriarchy is raised in conversation, someone seems to remark on how patriarchy is a 'woman-thing' – a thing invented by feminists for their own benefit. Yet, men and women alike experience the numbing effect of patriarchy on a daily basis. Migration is only one example (Clark 2004).

Patriarchy is one of the hegemonic discourses established through the course of history. One of the goals of feminism is to challenge patriarchy and it's powerfully subjugating effects on society. The concept of patriarchy comes into stark relief in most of the stories told to me by the migrants. In some of the stories patriarch seems palpable; in others, less so or hardly at all. In these instances are the stories of patriarchy possibly not spoken? Is the whole notion of how it is that migration presents itself in the world not perhaps an example of the patriarchal ways in which the world is set out and run?

The concept of patriarchy can possibly best be introduced to this writing by asking the following two questions: (1) What intentions or aims do the power/knowledge wielders have? And, (2) What are the effects of this power? For the purposes of this study, the power/knowledge wielders mentioned here are those persons in power positions in countries other than one's country of origin who have the authority to decide on the migrant's well-being. At this point, I recognise that by stating the latter, I am making an assumption about someone or a group of people and, in this way, I am guilty of surmising about Homeland Services across the globe. Moreover, I am thickening the discourse that "the decision-making authorities in all countries perpetrate injustices towards individuals and groups and should change their ways." A vital aspect of this journey is to re-story these assumptions I am making and to find alternative ways of speaking about them (White 1988/9:5-28; White 1995; Wingard & Lester 2001).

Patriarchal discourses have given power to men in our society, while women and children have been subjugated by this power. Patriarchy thus refers to male domination: to the power relationships by which men dominate women. Patriarchy characterises a system whereby women are kept subordinate in a number of ways (Bhasin 1993:3; Ruth 1995:53-62).

Patriarchy is admittedly most frequently viewed in terms of men's subjugating of women but, for these purposes the focus is on patriarchal practices within societal institutions, hence the preceding discussion on Foucault and power/knowledge. The discourse of patriarchy permeates the power institutions of the world. As discussed previously, Foucault suggests that the self-ascribed

'knowledge' that an institution or person adopts, convinces the institution or person that it is acceptable to be in a position of 'power' (Foucault 1980):

> … it is the crucial importance of accountability processes in forming partnerships between dominant and marginalised groups. Change needs to happen in partnership, and this partnership must recognise the realities of power differences, and find ways of addressing them. Modern Western culture, however, finds it extremely difficult to come to grips with issues of power, accountability, and the importance of structured power differences in forming the contexts of people's lives….Where our society does recognise the realities of power, it does so on an individual and hierarchical level … our society is fundamentally structured by collective power differences …
>
> (McLean, Carey & White 1995:4)

> 'Official' history suppresses the stories of resistance and dissent against the status quo and presents the past either as the triumph of the deserving or as inevitable. Critical history breaks open the past, in its full complexity, and re-presents that past as bearing a story of human struggle against domination. Even failed resistance bears powerful evidence of human dignity and courage that informs our contemporary vocations.
>
> (Harrison 1990:128)

Weedon (1987:12-42) describes patriarchy as a trans-historical, all-embracing structure, which makes use of the social relations of gender, class and race to wield its power/knowledge. Language and discourse are the vehicles for transmitting patriarchal stances. When patriarchy is taken for granted, men are unaware of how much the social structure yields advantage to them (Pease 1997:139).

Experiencing patriarchy in its perpetrated form is detestable. Patriarchy - its roots, its effects, and its continuance - should be faced and rethought by all genders and all institutions. Patriarchy is perpetrated in the most subversive ways in organisations. My story of migration, like Stella's story (See Chapter 6 below), refers to the practices of patriarchy in a vivid way. The patriarchal discourse finds its way into the lives of 'legal' migrants (See Chapter Four below) from the moment a work permit is applied for and granted or rejected by the powers that be and from there onwards the story continues. The story of reporting every move to the authorities, of reapplying for work permits, of only being allowed out of the country for a certain amount of days per year etc. speaks of patriarchy performed by institutions upon individuals and stands against the notion that patriarchy is merely a womanist (Thomas 1997) nagging.

Freedman and Combs (1996b:38-39) instruct their readers to educate themselves to recognise patriarchal culture and the effects of patriarchy in society. Only by becoming conscious of patriarchal practices and ways can change be brought about. Patriarchy's central aim is to exert power and control. The effect of this power and control is the subjugation of marginal groups (Castells 2000:242):

> Let us come back to the definition of the exercise of power as a way in which certain actions may structure the field of other possible actions. What therefore would be proper to a relationship of power is that it be a mode of action upon actions. (Foucault 1980:222)

2.2 Focusing on Jacques Derrida and Deconstruction

> All attempts to define deconstruction are bound to be false …. One of the principle things in deconstruction is the delimiting of ontology and above all of the third person present indicative: propositions of the form 'S is P'.
>
> Derrida's deconstruction attempts to show that everyday language is not neutral; it bears within it the presuppositions and cultural assumptions of a whole tradition …. Maybe this anti-Platonic element … is Derrida's most important contribution.
>
> Derrida was considered by some the most important philosopher of the late 20th century. Unfortunately, nobody was sure whether the intellectual movement he spawned – Deconstruction – advanced or murdered it.
>
> (Strathern 2003:44-45)

Jacques Derrida was born in Algiers in 1930 of a French colonial Jewish family. As a Jew, the monstrosities that occurred during World War II affected Derrida deeply, and became visible in the teenage rebellion of this highly intelligent, sensitive person. During this time of personal flux Derrida's thinking was influence primarily by reading Camus, Sartre, Husserl, and Heidegger.

For Derrida, philosophy is a questioning of the notion of philosophy – a questioning and interrogation of its very possibility - rather than a philosophy as such. He questions the whole basis of philosophy and its ability to operate on its own terms. He argues that in the past philosophy had been erroneous in searching for essential truth that was somehow contained in the essence of things. Philosophy should rather have concentrated on the language it uses (Grenz 1996:139).

According to Jacques Derrida, language does not have any equivalence to the things it is trying to describe. Western thought has been based upon the binary notion implicit in the law of the excluded middle. Our defining of concepts is dependent on oppositions. Language begets ambiguities. Language eludes clarity and precision. Every word has its own meaning or meanings, although its meaning as a way to communicate holds fast. Derrida called his process of argument or philosophical approach 'deconstruction' (Butler 2002:16; Sarup 1993:32-57; Strathern 2003). Deconstruction refers to the taking apart what has already implicitly been put together in a text. The colossal authority of a text is disassembled so that instead of one meaning, it takes on many. Derrida wants to open us up to the possibilities enclosed in the written/spoken word so that we might engage in an ongoing conversation with texts, whether written or spoken (Powell 1997).

Central to Derrida's deconstructionist philosophy is his insistence that "there is nothing outside the text." Derrida deconstructs a text not to oppose or subvert it, but to reveal what the text attempts to exclude and suppress and to examine its conceptual and ideological underpinnings. Deconstruction is not about opposing discourse, but rather about analysing the conceptual process of the discourse. Deconstruction contains a certain reflexivity and folding back on itself to thus reveal hidden meaning and possibilities within the text (Larner 1994:12; Sarup 1993:43).

Deconstruction is largely a philosophical reaction to structuralism, formalism and phenomenology and was developed in an academic milieu respectful of Marxism and psychoanalysis (Fish 1993:225). Deconstruction regards the text - the words as they are arranged - as exclusively relevant. Although the meaning of the text is held to be undecidable - the reader is allowed any interpretation ensuing from a 'free play' of meaning, with the understanding that the reader's interpretation, too, may be deconstructed at will - Derrida still seems to be committed to history and context.

Derrida coined the terms 'difference' and 'differance' in an attempt to clarify his conceptualisation of deconstruction. For Derrida, these terms refer to both differing and deferring. As such, they refer to Saussure's observations regarding linguistic signifiers – a word does not possess a fixed meaning within itself, but derives its meaning from its relations within the language system (Collins & Mayblin 1996:75-77, 79). Derrida adds, however, that not only does the signifier derive its meaning from the signifier just before or after it in the language chain, but also from the corresponding mental meaning signified – the concept, idea, perception, or emotion to which the word is attached. Meaning is never static: it differs over time and with changing contexts, and thus one should continually defer one's tendency to attribute meaning (Johnson 1999:49).

Derrida borrowed from Heidegger the practice of crossing out signifiers after he has written them by putting a cross through **~~the word~~**. Derrida adopted this method to support his thinking that words are only 'valid' as long as they are seen to construe meaning in terms of the signifier preceding it or coming after it or in terms of the context attributed to it (Powell 1997:16).

Derrida calls for the abandonment of attempts to describe reality ontologically as well as the idea that something transcendent is present in reality:

> If, then, it lays claim to any consequence, what is hastily called deconstruction *as such* is never a technical set of discursive procedures, still less a new hermeneutic method operating on archives or utterances in the shelter of a given stable institution; it is also, and at the least, the taking of a position, in work itself, toward the politico-institutional structures that constitute and regulate our practice, our competencies, and our performances.
>
> (Derrida 1981:22-23)

What is seen as Michel Foucault's cultural relativism was in accord with what is described as Jacques Derrida's linguistic relativism. Both were regarded as leaders of the movement known as Poststructuralism, along with Postmodernism, which regards all knowledge as textual (a relativistic interpretation of text). History, psychology, philosophy, and anthropology – all these dealt not so much with concepts, but with words. For Foucault, this led to *epistemes* (paradigms) of knowledge in which power was invested. For Derrida, it led to the 'dismantling' of linguistic conceptualisation, as we are bound within the circularity of our discourse. Derrida was thus concerned with the question of meaning: How does language derive its meaning? (Strathern 2003).

Derrida's question of meaning and language motivated an exploration into social construction thinking and, more particularly, the notion that meaning is constructed through language. The latter leads one to consider how it is that we speak, think and write about migration. Moreover, it leads one to consider whether our languaging of how individuals and groups experience migration – especially those practices perpetrated by the authorities on migrants - might prompt authorities to revisit their specific systems, rules and regulations. It seems that the numerous statistics about the influence of migration upon politics, the economy and the environment play into the discourses which authorities hold about migrants and thus allow them to perpetuate their practices. Would more narrative ways of reporting possibly be a way forward? Would considering a way where equality is deemed appropriate, in the first instance, be a more preferred option of going on together? Could we be informed by some of the ideas held by feminism regarding the possibility of a more equal experience with less subjugation by the authorities?

2.3 Focusing on Feminism

> My role as a feminist is not to compete with men in their world – that's too easy, and ultimately unproductive. My job is to live fully as a woman, enjoying the whole of myself and my place in the universe.
>
> (Madeleine L'Engle in Murdoch 1998:23)

Before embarking on a discussion of what the discourse of feminism involves, it would be useful to reflect on how feminism might assist the discussion on migration. Feminist ideas include those of equality and the intent to go about an inquiry in an ethical, open and honest way (Reinharz 1992) (see Chapter Five below). By discussing the important ideas held by feminism I hope to situate my position in this inquiry as well as to connect with the stance of Postmodernism and the emergence of Social Construction thinking from Postmodernism.

Keane (1998:122) asserts that the term Feminism originally meant "having the qualities of females" or of being "womanish" (bell hooks 2000:56). In time, Feminism became identified with a movement for the liberation of women. This liberation was initially the liberation from male dominance, or patriarchy, which relegated women to the realm of second-class citizens, with no rights and/or competencies, as discussed above. It is interesting to observe, however, that whilst feminism is seen as set within the polarities between man and woman, it also aims to eradicate the misogyny inherent within feminism itself (Walters 2005:3). Does feminism perpetrate that which it purports to eradicate? Does the stand against patriarchy drive women to take up the role of matriarchs? Do we, as exponents of Social Constructionism, raise new discourses to be upheld? Remaining conscious of how we represent what it is we are inquiring into might offer an alternative to the possible perpetuation of discourses. By continually reminding ourselves that as 'Postmodern Feminists' we do not have to expend our energies by looking for the one great and ultimate 'Truth', we are set free to inquire into the void and to make known practices which could be discoursed in an alternative, thicker way (Butler 1995:35; Zalewski 2001:129).

Keane (1998:124) acknowledges that Reformist Feminists position patriarchy as the result of men fearing women and thus having to 'protect' themselves against women. Although the beginnings of men fearing women are part of antiquity and unable thus to be traced, men's fear seems to be rooted in the fact that females are the reproductive species. The reproductive aspect of womanhood caused males to relegate females into a subordinate, subjugated, marginalised role, hence the emergence of patriarchy. It would seem that theology has served this male fear well and that fear's hand-maiden - patriarchy - has been an extremely loyal servant to its master (Keane 1998:122-124).

Institutions like the church and theology have nurtured and upheld patriarchy as one of its dependable foundations. That is, until the turn of the 18th century when women like Sister Juana Inés and Mary Wollstonecraft (Watkins, Rueda & Rodriguez 1999:6-11) started to voice their concerns publicly regarding patriarchal practices. Phyllis Trible's *Texts of Terror* (1984) illustrates the propagation of patriarchy in the Bible by scrutinizing the story of Hagar the Egyptian slave woman, the story of Tamar whose brother raped her, the story of the Levite who 'takes' a nameless woman and the story of Jephta's sacrifice of his daughter.

The notions of Feminism correspond with the notions of the worldwide theological movement known as Liberation Theology, which has close links to Women's Liberation (Walters 2005). This movement was directed against the major social evils of our time and claimed to offer a new way of doing what contributes to the overcoming of human oppression. Like Liberation Theology and the Women's Liberation movement, Feminism endeavours to empower oppressed women and other

marginalised and subjugated groups, enabling them to stand against domination and subjugation by oppressors. Feminism takes context, culture and religious traditions seriously and is revolutionary and reformist. If this is what Feminism stands for, it is not surprising that I choose to position myself thus in my search for equity for the migrants of all designations – the whole spectrum between 'legal' to 'illegal' and those in-between.

The Feminist movement spans a continuum between the separatist approach - for instance Mary Daly (1979) - and the reformist feminists, such as Rosemary Radford-Reuther (1973:13) who advocates mutuality between the genders. Moreover, the focus is not exclusively on women. Eiseland (1994) reminds us not to forget disabled persons when considering the scope of marginalised people: "deafness, paralysis, multiple sclerosis, and mental retardation may produce the same social problems of stigma, marginality, and discrimination" (Eiseland 1994:24). I wish to add the category of 'migrant' to Eiseland's list of marginalised peoples.

Feminist theory has helped Feminists to understand their individual standpoints and has provided the framework for seeing and participating in the world around them (Rakow 1992:4). It has enabled them to discuss their history or current state of affairs by using their different fields of expertise as the vehicles for these discussions. According to Rakow, one must make it impossible for anyone to render women invisible. Women can perpetuate their process of visibility by never forgetting their history and struggle. bell hooks (1997:533-539) cautions women to know their history and their identity when they claim that the "personal is the political." In 1666 Mary Astell had cautioned women to take themselves seriously, to trust their own judgement and to make their own choices in life by educating themselves and developing their own talents (Walters 2005:29). She thus stepped into the void and put herself up for being politicised and for making a stand towards embodying the personal is the political."

Women need to be mindful of the fact that they are accountable to each other – both historically and currently - in their endeavour towards ethical practices when being in the world and going on together. *Relationality* has become a key description for an inclusive view of humanity. Relationality is understood as the practice of love and justice between people (Hogan 1996:202). Along with relationality there are many other themes that run through Feminism, such as mutuality, reciprocity and interdependence. McNeil (1993:50) adds the idea of *consciousness-raising* as another ideal of feminism, but stresses that it fitted into the larger picture about feminism and served to unveil and transform the patterns of women's oppression. I believe that it also served to unveil more widespread patterns of subjugation and oppression, especially as the practice of feminist research became more abundant and accepted. Reinharz (1992) is a case in point and serves to underscore my opinion regarding the notion that feminism, rather than being a prohibiting factor, contributes instead to an ethical stance within research.

Sharon Welch (1990:155), a Feminist, speaks of "cultured despair" as the knowledge of the extent of injustice in a society, but being unable to act on that injustice. She claims that one needs sheer holy boldness or "an ethic of risk" to walk where angels fear to tread and to take responsible action when all the odds are against one. An ethic of risk refers to an ethic that begins with the recognition that we cannot guarantee changes in the near future, but that we can nevertheless keep pushing toward transformation. While we might push for resistance and transformation, we always need to remember that we cannot make the decision to go on the journey on behalf of someone else. This risk of losing control, the risk of becoming vulnerable, is the doing of risk and the doing of feminism. Questioning the practices against migrants seems to me part of a "cultured despair." How would interviewing a handful of migrants change this world-wide injustice? I am reminded of the words of my advisor, Sheila McNamee, regarding the bringing of change: "One conversation at a time!"

Words and language play an important role in Feminism. Words create and perpetuate reality. Feminism wants to overcome the false divisions between spirit/matter, male/female, black/white, human/animal, humanity/nature, heterosexual/homosexual, young/old, rich/poor, migrant/citizen. It wants to overcome the binary oppositions described by Foucault and to speak into the in-between - the liminal space - that hovers loudly in its joining of the opposites. As Wittgenstein suggests, the one cannot exist without the other: black cannot be black without white. How we discourse about the black-ness or white-ness is what is at the heart of the matter. How we co-create - through joint action and conversation – the otherness that might lie between the two is what inches towards change.

Hawkesworth (2006:6) makes it abundantly clear that one should aspire to move from political conviction to knowledge production. The aim in this regard should be focused on making power dynamics visible, probing silences, absences and distortions in modern paradigms/discourses so that we may explore new questions to ask and challenge the taken-for-granted facts of life. In the same breath, though, she cautions against "evidence blindness" – against seeing only what we want to see and hearing only what we want to hear.

C. CONCLUSION

Grenz (1996:40) succinctly reminds us that "… In a sense, Postmoderns have no worldview. A denial of the reality of a unified world as the object of our perception is at the heart of Postmodernism. Postmoderns reject the possibility of constructing a single correct worldview and are content simply to seek of many views and by extension, many worlds. By replacing the modern worldview with a multiplicity of views and worlds, the Postmodern era has in effect replaced knowledge with interpretation…" Although the latter can be considered with a certain critical eye, Grenz clearly makes the point that there are many views and not only one ultimate Truth. According to Ward (2010:13), Postmodernism's sense of fluidity and open-endedness is both a difficulty and a strength.

If we take into account that Feminism asks of us to consider alternative ways of looking at how the world and its trappings could be constructed in an alternative, less pejorative and subjugating way (Eagleton 2011:8), it makes a certain kind of sense that one would consider Postmodernism and Feminism together, along with Social Constructionism, which will be discussed during the course of the next chapter. Having said that, Cain (1993:73-96) cautions us to be mindful about what Foucault cannot bring to Feminism: namely, how it is that we may reproduce knowledge that is helpful to women; how we might consider that which is outside of discourse; and most importantly for this journey, how it is that we might recover the silenced or repressed voices.

Social Constructionism stands for questioning the way things are spoken of, are thought of and are written about – the abounding discourses found in the world – and to make a place for a way that is more generative than restrictive in its application. It asks, in essence, how it is that we might - through joint action - go on together. Social Construction might thus be considered a possibility in bridging the gap (Cain 1993:73-96). How might we language, together, a language that crosses the divides and thus cohabitates in a space doable for all, but which drives towards social change rather than acknowledgement?

CHAPTER THREE
Social Construction

'For things to reveal themselves to us,
we need to be ready to
abandon our views about them.'
Thich Nhat Hanh (Being Peace)

A. INTRODUCTION

I continue to stare at my computer screen (a practice that seems to have re-established its relentless ways) after typing two particularly weighty words - 'Inquiry Epistemology' – the original heading to this chapter. Even typing the words 'Inquiry Epistemology' seem to have had an intimidating effect and Sisyphus' boulder has just grown incrementally. I immediately stop dead in my typing tracks. I reconsider. 'Inquiry Epistemology'? Is that *really* what I will be writing about? It might well be, but I prefer to think about 'Inquiry Epistemology' in a somewhat less daunting way: in a way that is more doable, more familiar and will allow a certain knowing to hover over Sisyphus' boulder. A knowing tinged with the familiarity of old slippers or of slipping on that comfortable old cardigan after a hard day's work.

Most of what I have been engaged with since first encountering Social Construction during 1998 has been rooted within this preferred way of being – the way of allowing knowing to develop its own meaning rather than *knowing* something with a certainty akin to Truth. It seems the next logical step should be to situate why I grounded Stories within Social Construction, and then to review what the literature has to say about Social Construction. But then my eye catches Thich Nhat Hanh's words (quoted above) – a sentiment I surmise might be shared by Gergen and Hosking (2006:299-314). I realize that while I might think that Social Construction ideas feel as familiar as old slippers, it would be wise to set aside my knowing to make place for new ideas and new considerations...

During Chapter Three, I will thus consider both the epistemological and the incumbent ontological background to the question that struck me that Saturday at the traffic intersection at the Menlyn Shopping Centre in Pretoria: How does one go about this thing called migration? *Ontology* is defined as "... the philosophical study of the nature of being, existence or reality as such, as well as the basic categories of being and their relations ..." (Wikipedia 2012, Feb 20). *Epistemolog*y is "... the branch of philosophy concerned with the nature and scope (limitations) of knowledge." It addresses the questions: What is knowledge? How is knowledge acquired? How do we know what we know?' (Wikipedia 2012, Feb 23) I want to discover why I think about the migratory process in the way I do. I want to situate the questions which have hounded me from the outset: Can one, with some sense of confidence say that migrating from one culture to another leaves an aftermath on one's experience of one's sense of self(?) or identity? (see Chapter Four below) and How is one influenced by the migratory process should one be influenced at all?

Here I would like to draw attention to the phrase "one's *sense of self(?) or identity."* I am aware that as I utter these words I am consciously perpetuating the discourse of individualism or essentialism – namely that the 'I' is where it begins and ends. I hope that as my argument for Social Constructionism develops, together with the notions of Postmodernism and Feminism as proposed in the previous chapter, this idea of 'identity' may be viewed as fluid, non-bounded and continually influenced by relationships. As such Identity takes its meaning from conversations and interactions,

rather than from being conceptualized as something which can be predicted and ascertained. But for the sake of clarity and flow, I prefer to use the term 'Identity'.

Even though the possible shifting of identity throughout the migratory experiences will remain the focus of this inquiry, I am aware that other possibilities will also emerge. These possibilities include issues such as the categorization of migration; why some migrants find it harder or easier to adapt; what aided their adaptation or non-adaptation; how they now view the concept of culture; and how they made meaning of the whole experience. Yet, for the scope of this inquiry, I prefer to limit myself to the question about identity in order to give it the consideration I believe it deserves (see Chapter One above and Chapter Four below). I acknowledge that these other issues also deserve consideration, but this is not doable within the remit of this inquiry. This writing will at least draw attention to some questions which could be highlighted during forthcoming inquiries.

B. SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION

Social Construction offers the intertwined epistemological and ontological stance on which I will ground the inquiry into Stories. Epistemology refers to what the best way of uncovering what the nature of the world we live in might be. Epistemology also infers the notion of ontology, which asks questions about what sorts of worlds we can live in and how we decide upon the criteria that helps us make up our minds about which world we prefer, and why (Lock & Strong 2010: 8; Crotty 2010:7). Giles Deleuze asks: "How might I live?" (May 2005:1). Social Construction offers a possibility of how we might live. In this chapter I want to inquire into this possibility, whilst being ever aware of the reality of seeking a situating of my experience as a migrant in a country of which I had thought I 'knew' the language and culture.

The reasoning behind the decision to situate this inquiry within Social Construction arises mainly from my 14 year-long journey and continuing development within the ideas of Social Construction. While I firmly believe that Social Construction will be able to help me make sense of the question foremost in my mind when considering the stories of migration, I am also open to the possibility that this indeed might not be the case. I have not gone on this particular journey before, and thus have not had the opportunity to co-mingle with Social Construction in a way that will allow me to ask questions about how we might go on from here.

The first part of the question is about *whether* and *how* we change, if indeed we should think of our experience(s) as *changing*. The second part of the question is about whether this change has a bearing on our experience of ourselves(?) (that which could be called '*identity*') and how that effect makes itself visible in our lives. It is my experience that Social Construction allows me to reflect on how we may understand our life-worlds and choose the worlds in which we prefer to live (see Chapter Seven below).

In order to engage in an informed understanding of Social Construction it is necessary to explore the history and the thinking that underpins the notions embedded in the theory which stands alongside Social Construction (see Chapter Two above). I will thus discuss the more prominent authors that predated and paved the way for Social Construction. In doing so, I acknowledge that I have represented these authors in a rather selective way and have condensed their multi-faceted work into a rather limited and limiting paragraph or two, taking from their writing only what I think necessary to the inquiry as a whole.

1. A Concise Consideration of Various Contributors to the Historical Development of Social Construction Thinking

Crotty (2010:42-65), along with a plethora of other authors, explains that Social Construction evolved from the foundations of the various reactions to the Enlightenment and the objectivism found in the positivist stance (see above Chapter Two). Objectivism refers to the view that truth and meaning have a firm base and are not dependent on any form of consciousness. It endorses the notion of objective truth and that the ultimate Truth can be found if the *correct* methods of inquiry are employed.

Social Constructionism stands in contrast to objectivism. It holds that all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices: it is constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context (Crotty 2010:42). The following authors represent those philosophers who took up positions contrary to the views held by the Enlightenment movement. They are regarded as those who may have nudged the contemplations towards what is now seen as Social Construction. I have selected the following theorists/philosophers merely on the premise of having been exposed to their writing and thus having a better understanding of their ideas. Many other writers qualify to be included in the line-up and might be more familiar to readers.

***Giovanni (Giambattista) Vico (1668 – 1744)*:** Giambattista Vico can be seen as one of the earliest proponents of Social Construction thinking (Lock & Strong 2010:12-27). Vico developed a philosophy that described history as the key to understanding human nature. He grounded his notion in the emergence of language, rhetoric and law. He thought that human beings were beings to whom history was important both in its reconstructive nature and in the living thereof. Vico dared differ with Descartes' view that we could find certainty through empirical means. He believed that one could only show knowledge to be 'true' if one considered its historical origins. He also asserted that, as participants in history, we had a greater sense of 'knowing' than we would have as mere observers.

Vico placed a comprehension of others as core to humanity. He was convinced that the mind is formed by language and *vice versa*: this makes language central to humanity. Foreshadowing authors such as Hegel, Marx, Engels, Wittgenstein and Merleau-Ponty, Vico is well known for his proposition: *verum esse ipsum factum* ("true itself is fact" or "the true itself is made"). The latter assertion links him to Social Construction.

The idea of construction is also central to Vico's theories. Vico claimed that events are constructed through the use of fables. In this way, shared understandings construct the nature of what is being understood. Shotter (1981:273) quotes Vico to support his notion of joint action in society. Joint action refers to the idea that social order, or culture, originates as people do things together: in the togetherness - or joint action - society emerges. Language emerges to pass on "knowledge"/experience/understanding/meaning of this joint action.

Vico's idea that humans do not develop their ability to use reason to create reason – that reason evolved from their being-in-the-world together through 'joint action' - leads him to propose that this 'reason' may or may not change, depending on the situation in which the individual finds him-/herself (Bookrags, 2012, 24 February; Lock & Strong 2010:12-28; Vico, 1744; Wikipedia, 2012, 24 February).

Edmund Husserl (1859-1938):Husserl was originally known as a philosopher and a mathematician, but broke with the positivist stance of the day to found the school of phenomenology. Husserl's

stance was mainly that knowledge is constructed through consciousness or through experiencing. One thus needs to focus on that which precedes knowledge – the conscious. Husserl asserted that one should not begin with discourse at all, but should rather "bracket" – make an *epoché* (a suspension of all belief) - of what the nature of reality might be about (Husserl 1931; Lock & Strong 2010:31).

Husserl thus foregrounds lived experience above reason, dialogue, knowledge and discourse. We experience first, and then the "knowing" follows. Husserl coins the notion of the *lebenswelt* (lived-world). He links intentionality to consciousness: intentionality is inherently part of consciousness. One is always conscious of something and, in giving voice to the conscious, one gives meaning (intentionality) to the object of consciousness.

Husserl moves away from individual consciousness to describe subjectivity and intersubjectivity. By our being in the world together (our intersubjectivity) we construct ourselves as subjects and, by means of empathy, we can go on together in the world. Husserl's thinking implies that one can make sense of the world by making sense of one's intentionality or conscience, which in essence reflects an individualistic view, quite contra to what Social Construction promotes (Lock & Strong 2010: 29-35; Welton 1999; Wikipedia, 2012, 14 January).

Alfred Schutz (1899-1959): followed on from Husserl in asserting the idea that the conscious experience of the individual is central to his view. The notion of *lebenswelt* is also deemed important by Schutz. We make sense of the world through the meanings we have stored in our consciousness. These meanings are representations of our experiences and, by means of these experiences, we construct our worlds. It is important to be aware, though, that Schutz notes the significance of language in one's going about one's *lebenswelt*. The ability to share the languaging required to form part of a group motivates one to gain and assign interpretational relevance and thus to be able to go about one's business at hand. By means of acquiring the ability to grant interpretational relevance, one is able to typify experiences and thus make sense of them. By thinking about previous experiences, one is able to predict with/-out accuracy future outcomes.

Schutz offered an explanation of the practical components of one's daily life by differentiating between two forms of conduct: namely, *action,* which is a form of conduct that had been pre-decided and which leads to one acting in some way, namely *working*. Both actions and work are executed due to our motives (reasons) for doing or achieving something. Here Schutz is quite possibly referring to Husserl's notion of intentions.

Schutz is not implying that we have set pre-determined actions, but that our actions draw on our experiences as a whole. One adapts to the world around one by making use of one's experiences and, where these experiences prove inadequate to assist with the meaning-making required, one is in a process of becoming adept at dealing with presenting situations. Schutz thus moves away from *being* to *becoming* and the importance of going on together in the social world, a tenet important to Social Construction (Lock & Strong 2010: 35-44; Embree 2011; Wikipedia, 2012, 14 January).

***Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961)*:** moves away from the ideas held by phenomenology, namely, that the mind should be the centre of philosophical concern. Merleau-Ponty brings one's body into focus by viewing the body as the core of consciousness. He believes that one does something not by merely thinking about it, but by also bringing the body into play. We train our bodies to engage with certain activities. The training of our bodies interplays with our consciousness. Merleau-Ponty thus claims that our bodies are the place where the world and the mind meet (Lock & Strong 2010:49). He suggests that our bodies afford our perceptions a certain sociability.

According to Merleau-Ponty one can, for instance, observe something happening. One then reacts to this observed event and, in this way one is then socially positioned in terms of one's initial observation. Our bodies experience our senses, react upon those experiences and attribute meaning to those experiences. By making meaning through our bodily experiences, we become interlocutors in the dialogue of society. One does not have to own a certain language to make meaning; one draws on one's perceptions and conscience to attribute interpretation. A social component is added when one is able to share language. This is often influenced by cultural knowledges and practices. Social Construction foregrounds languaging in giving meaning to relationships (Lock & Strong 2010: 47-52; Embree 2011; Wikipedia, 2012, 14 January).

***Martin Heidegger (1889-1976)*:** Meaning-making leads us to the world of Heidegger and hermeneutics. Heidegger was particularly consumed with the notion of 'being'. It is thought that Husserl (Heidegger's mentor) had a more transcendental interest in being – wordless experience - whereas Heidegger was more pragmatic in his questioning of what makes possible our ways of being in the world (Lock & Strong 2021:57). Heidegger was more concerned with the ontological question of whether it would be possible to live life without thought and reflection.

In *Being and Time* (1969) Heidegger turns to the explication of 'Being'. Heidegger refers to *Being* as a verb that points to the idea that we are already in a world where we are interacting before any pondering about that world has taken place. We do not first theorize about the world and then act upon it – a notion that holds an important position within Social Construction. Like Hegel (Kojève 1969:103), Heidegger constantly reminds us that we should pay attention to the movement of the thought that happens in any questioning (more than the words that make up the questioning) in order for that questioning really to be heard. Languaging happens in the undoing of any understanding by virtue of such questioning thus enabling us to get to the nature of Being - to the *Dasein*. Heidegger refers to *Dasein* (being-there or there-being) as the existence of life at its most basic.

Heidegger agreed with his mentor, Husserl, that all experiences are the same for everyone, before any cultural understandings are interpolated. He later turned from his well-known phrase "to things themselves" and focused more on how it was that our most fundamental ways of being were possible. He looked into how people navigated life and made sense of life – how we got by within certain contexts. How do we do the social things we do in an acceptable way without pondering them beforehand or pondering them too much, *post facto*? In questioning Being, Heidegger is asking questions about human engagement with life - another of the questions with which Social Construction concerns itself.

A certain set of tools is necessary for life to be this shared project proposed by Heidegger. He points to language as the tool that makes understanding and communicating possible. As we use language in a resourceful way, we engage in meaning-making and understanding. Through language - and by means of its use - we engage in society, in Being and in *Dasein* in its most essential form (Heidegger 1962; Lock & Strong 57-63; Lucy 2004:7).

Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002): was a close follower of Heidegger. His goal was to uncover the nature of human understanding. In *Truth and Method* (1960) he argued that "truth" and "method" were at odds with one another. He was critical of modern approaches to the humanities that modelled themselves on the natural sciences (and thus on rigorous scientific methods). He also took issue with the traditional German approach to the humanities, which stated that correctly interpreting a text meant recovering the original intention of the author who wrote it. In contrast to both of these positions, Gadamer argued that people have a "historically effected consciousness"

and that persons are embedded in the particular history and culture that shaped them (Jung's archetypes?). Both these ideas proposed by Gadamer foreshadow the notions held by Social Construction.

For Gadamer, meaning arises in the conversational space created between interlocutors – even though these conversationalists might be from different cultures or backgrounds. He also sets a very high value on the languaging between conversationalists: going on together would be futile without the act of languaging. To be effective languaging needs to be successful or skilful rather than correct. Gadamer describes dialoguing as articulating the in-between (Lock & Strong 2010:70). Gadamer, much like Paul Ricoeur, suggested that conversations should permit a sense of play to thus skilfully extract the in-between implicit in the conversation. It is in the play that the unexpected happens and new meanings are made. However, the play of conversing should not step beyond the ethical boundaries that keep it respectful and useful to all the interlocutors and should thus allow anyone to step away from the conversation at any time.

Gadamer advocates a personal willingness to suspend one's personal "truth" when entering into conversation and thus to allow new meanings to be made – a participatory or inter-related meaning-making. Paul Levinas' idea that language is a human way of constructing things in a certain way - and not a godlike attempt at producing the ultimate truth - mirrors Gadamer's notion of meaning arising in the in-between. Ricoeur cautions us, however, not to lose the coherence of meaning when engaged in such word-play or meaning-making. Hans-Georg Gadamer offers a capsule of the way Social Construction chooses to position itself within the world of thinking about the world (Gadamer 1983; Gadamer 2004; Lock & Strong 2010: 64-73).

Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975): Amongst various other topics, Bakhtin considered the philosophy of language. For our purpose we will focus on concepts which he introduced and which have influenced Social Constructions. These concepts include: dialogism (the dialogic work carries on a continual dialogue with other works of literature and other authors, present or absent) (Gergen 2009a:39); polyphony (a diversity of points, views and arguments and no single truth); carnival (the time when various voices and various interpretations of ideas are heard and allowed and genuine dialogue becomes possible); heteroglossia (the possible multi-meaningness of a word or symbol during its use); and exotopy (being on the outside of a telling about someone's lived experience, but trying to imagine the experience) (Nance 2006:10-14). These concepts indicate a distinctive philosophy of language and culture that has at its centre the claim that all discourse is in essence a dialogical exchange, which endows all language with a particular ethical or ethico-political energy.

Bakhtin gave language to the perceptions and the experiences of conversationalists across time. Language does not leave one untouched whether one is physically present in the conversation or whether one is positioned as observer to the dialogue. How one goes about the dialogue determines whether new meanings are made or new positions occupied. We populate dialogue with our being in the dialogue in more than a physical sense (Gergen 2009a: 39, 141, 251; Gergen 2009b 95; Hirschkop & Sheperd 2001; Lock & Strong 2010:85-100; Loquist 2002).

***Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934)*:** Vygotsky's main interest was child development and how such development was guided by the role of culture and language. Vygotsky was most concerned with the inter-relationship between language development and thought. Vygotsky considered how higher mental functions developed historically - within particular cultural groups - and individually

through the social interactions which a child had with significant people - parents in particular, but other adults also. (In my opinion, such development is not exclusive to children, but might also be necessary for people who find themselves within a new culture where the learning of a new language contributes to survival.) Through such interactions, a child comes to learn the habits of mind of her/his culture. These include speech patterns, written language, and other symbolic knowledges through which the child derives meaning and which then influences a child's construction of her/his knowledge.

Vygotsky introduced the notion of the zone of proximal development (zoped or ZPD) in the learning process. He suggests that one is able to learn within the range of one's ability (zoped) at any given time; but if an instruction is aimed at a level far above or far below the range of the learner, little, if any, learning will take place. Vygotsky also stressed the social and cultural interaction needed for any learning to take place. Change and learning takes place as meaning is made along with others who populate one's environment. Vygotsky used the metaphor of *scaffolding* to describe the learning process. As child builds upon previous learning, new learning should usually aim at the next level of the scaffold ("one head taller"). This scaffolding maintains and increases the motivation to interact. But when levels are skipped (learning is aimed at more than "one head taller" than the recipient), then this frequently results in some form of distancing or withdrawal from the learning (Hayward, M. Personal notes from a lecture on Lev Vygotsky (July 2009).

Vygotsky placed considerable emphasis upon the place of social and cultural interaction in the development of language and on the importance of relationships in language acquisition and in our being together in the world. Once again we see how Social Construction is aligned with the notions he proposed (Gergen 2009a:79; Gergen 2009b:21-23; Kozalin 1986; Lock & Strong 2010:104-120).

***Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951)*:** This paragraph focuses on Wittgenstein's later work and his insights into the relations between world, thought and language. Wittgenstein's movement away from dogmatism is probably the biggest shift between his early and his later work. This shift from the realm of logic to that of ordinary language; from an emphasis on definition and analysis to 'language-games'; and from systematic philosophical writing to an aphoristic style all have to do with this transition towards anti-dogmatism in its extreme.

This move away from dogma – from ultimate 'Truths' to expressing opinions and general observations - aligned his writing more closely with Social Construction. Wittgenstein proposed various aspects acceptable to Social Construction, such as his construction of meaning, language games and the everyday use of language. Wittgenstein saw the construction of meaning as embedded in the particular use of the word or phrase at that very stage of a conversation. For instance, meaning could be supposed outside of a conversation – as in a dictionary definition - *versus* the implicit meaning of the word as it is understood by all the conversational partners. According to Wittgenstein, the latter (implicit meaning) only becomes apparent in conversation. New meanings might also be constructed during the course of conversations. The converse is also true: you could be left out of the conversation if you do not understand the meaning presupposed during the use of a word or phrase.

This notion leads directly to Wittgenstein's offering of the notion of language games. He proposes that we all are involved in language games. Language games are the games we play when we use language. These games have the ability to include or exclude us from conversations. If you not

understand the 'rules' to the particular language-game being played, you are quite clearly not involved in the discussion, excommunicated from the conversation and marked as an outsider. The ability or not to participate in language-games can contribute significantly to whether or not we fit into a cultural group. *How* we use language was of prime importance to Wittgenstein. Language has the ability to create distance or make shared meaning - meaning is made in context.

This last statement reminds me of the time when I was working with the street gangs in Mitchell's Plain, Cape Town. I was obviously an outsider: I did not have the faintest idea of the language games being played between the gang members or the language-games being played between the different gangs. It is only when a young man (16 years old) *very* surreptitiously requested that I see him, in ***absolute*** secret, for therapy purposes, after his mother was raped and killed by a member of another gang, that I was slowly initiated into his gang's language games. It was only when I spoke, even *some* of their language, that I made any headway in our work together. Culturally I had started to fit in. Only then could we go on together. We were coordinating our interactions and our understandings. I was beginning to understand the 'grammars' underpinning the language-games.

Grammars refer to the contextualized meanings attributed to words above and beyond their basic rules. Grammars represent the 'rules' of the language-game. It refers to the fact that words alone do nothing, but when we put them into certain relationships, they create shared meaning which occurs as a result of interactions between people. It is important to note that for Wittgenstein language is not confined to the spoken word, but includes those 'languages' peripheral to the spoken word.

Wittgenstein refers to the way in which our private, internalized conversations are anticipated or imagined conversations with others. Gergen (2009a:174, 216) makes mention of this notion and proposes it as a central tenet to his work. Wittgenstein suggests that we revert to our primitive language games/grammars – the language games we had learnt at the earliest time in our respective lives - when we are stuck, for instance, when we find ourselves in a place of emotionality. It is important to note Wittgenstein's commitment to the social nature of language and meaning making.

He speaks of private language, the languaging of our inner experiences. How often have we been caught in the act of 'knowing' one's private thoughts and being able to language it to one's self, but being unable to language it to a listener – it is almost as if the languaging of the thought escapes its utterance. Wittgenstein proposes that our ability to acquire self-intelligibility is socially developed. It is only in the recognizing and reporting of our private thoughts and our private experiences - and thus languaging them - that we acquire the skill of self-intelligibility (Grayling 1988; Heaton & Groves 2005; Lock & Strong 2010:141-169; Richter 2004).

***Gregory Bateson (1904-1980)*:** Anthropologist Gregory Bateson is quite possibly best known for his contribution to systems therapy and his notion of cybernetics. He offered the idea of patterns to human problems and practices associated to human change and incorporated the biological aspect and cybernetics into his views about the nature of relationships. He proposed the process point of view of relating and life. His experience, as an anthropologist, of researching the interactions between cultures contributed to his later stance regarding systems theory and process theory.

According to Bateson humans do not only describe their experiences, but, in the (repeated) descriptions of their experiences they make meaning of their experiences. It is on the basis of their meaning-making and understanding of their environment(s) that they are able to intervene in terms of their environment(s). Bateson calls such interventions and interactions 'epistemologies'. His use of epistemologies refers to his view that people view their world in a certain way. They hold certain beliefs about their world and these views and beliefs determine how they should be and act in their world. Bateson believed that the acting of the person within his world happens in a cyclical, repetitive, recursive or cybernetic manner. The person is informed by feedback loops that carry information regarding how it is that s/he should act in a certain instance. These feedback loops contribute to the recursive nature of behaviour. One is often confronted with double binds within these feedback loops, especially if the feedback loops prove to be less constructive in nature.

According to Bateson, a double bind has the following attributes: (1) It needs two or more persons to be in interaction. (2) It needs repeated experiences together (recursiveness). (3) It needs to be a statement that catches someone in the middle, without options. For example: "You are allowed do go out with your friends, but know that I will be unhappy about it." (4) The latter statement needs to comprise of a secondary injunction that draws upon the statement that catches someone in the middle. To return to our example: if you decide to stay home, you might be questioned on why you did not go out as planned, or you might be ignored on your return if you should indeed go out with your friends. (5) The relationship does not allow the person to escape the double bind. (6) The person perceives the world in terms of these double bind patterns and thus continues to interact with the world in this way.

The relevance of Bateson's work to Social Construction lies, amongst various other aspects, in his reminder to us to take note of how we co-evolve with the world we inhabit and to take note of our socially constructed meaning-making on both a relational and an informational level (Bakan 2010:31-47; Bateson 2010:129-146; Brink 1996:3-15; Gergen 2009a:278; Rieber 2010:1-30; Strong, 2010:170-186;).

Thomas Kuhn (1922-1996):Kuhn is known for various contributions to the progress of scientific knowledge. He is possibly most famous for the notion that scientific fields undergo periodic 'paradigm shifts', rather than continuing only in a linear and constant way. This notion of 'paradigms' - and what a paradigm signified - unwrapped new approaches to understanding never before considered valid by scientists. Kuhn also asserted that at any particular moment the idea of scientific truth could not be established solely by objective criteria, but could only be defined by the agreement of one or various scientific communities.

There seems to be a parallel between the use of psychological measurement tools and Kuhn's notion regarding paradigms and the coordination that is required within a community to lend truth status to a set of knowledges (Iverson, *et al* 2005:1-20). As competing paradigms are frequently incommensurable – they may be competing accounts of reality, or Truth - they cannot necessarily be merged coherently. Our comprehension of science can thus never rely on full 'objectivity': we must account for subjective perspectives as well. It would seem that Kuhn, from his perspective as a scientist, nevertheless had much to speak into the views upheld by Social Constructionism (Bird 2011; Winter 2011; Wood 2012; Forster March 1988).

2. THE SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION JOURNEY

2.1 Language

The discourse governing or underlying Social Construction is the notion that language constitutes reality. Our language includes our constructions about the world and about ourselves. What it is that we pay particular attention to may be found in the stories we tell ourselves about ourselves and about our particular world or our extended world. These stories have a way of gaining ultimate Truth status in our lives, and, within collaborative and participatory actions these ultimate Truth claims may offer new possibilities of going on within society. Wittgenstein's (1953: 109) aphorism reminds us that "... problems are solved, not by giving new information, but by arranging what we have always known."

Social Construction sees language as more than just a way of connecting people. People exist in language. Language is a reality. While meaning and understanding can exist before language has been spoken, it comes into being within language (Anderson & Goolishian 1988:37; White 1989). Language thus constitutes meaning (Freeman, *et al* 1997). The Social Constructionist discourse focuses not just on the individual, but on the social interaction in which the language is produced, maintained and discarded. Language is thus "the crucible of change, both personal and social" (Burr 1995:43).

2.2 Ultimate Truths

Ultimate Truths are those ideas we hold that are inalienable from our lives. For instance, if I leave my house without lipstick or my hair just-so, I will be regarded as a sloppy, good-for-nothing woman and people will think less of me. This idea about how I present myself to the outside world might be constructed from the cultural discourse prevalent within the society of which I form a part. In another culture, however, such behaviour could invite suspicion that I might be trading my body for financial gain. Burr (2008:4-5) reminds us that how people interpret and experience the world is primarily the product of socio-cultural processes which are rooted in history rather than in our biological functioning. The 'facts' we assume as being all-governing of our lives contain a political element. Thus when we say that this is this and that is that, we infer that we 'know' something that someone else does not know which in turns assumes that we have a certain power over them, *albeit* knowledge-power (Gergen 2000:13-19).

2.3 Discourse

Social Construction spotlights the concept of discourse. Burr (2008:63) describes discourse as "... an instance of situated language use." Discourse has become a central concept in Postmodern thought. Discourse may indicate firstly, a public "process of conversation" through which meanings are constituted, and secondly, it refers to "systematic and institutionalized ways of speaking/writing" or otherwise making sense of language (Kotzé & Kotzé 1997:2). The Social Constructionist discourse "views discourse about the world not as a reflection or map of the world, but as an artefact of communal interchange" (Gergen 1985).

Social Constructionist discourse focuses on how ideas and attitudes have developed over time within a social or community context. It is especially interested in the narratives or discourses that have taken on a normative standard against which people measure and judge themselves. It focuses on how the prevailing norms have evolved over time, especially those that marginalize and subjugate people. It focuses on knowledge as power and recognizes that therapeutic practices are political. It does not recognize that all stories are equally valid, but acknowledges rather that some accounts are not respectful of difference, like gender, ethnicity, race or religion. Social Construction prefers stories which are based on a person's lived experience rather than some domain of "expert

knowledge." Stories based on lived experience allow for the experience of personal agency (Doan 1997:130; Gergen 1985:266-275; Lannaman 1999).

2.4 Stories

While the term "discourse" might allude to what might be described as "a story", the literature seems to suggest that discourse refers to the many stories that make up a certain (cultural) context, whilst stories are the narrated bits and pieces that contribute to the discourse. A more constructivist, individualist stance would infer that stories could be seen as constitutive of what people believe to be true about themselves and are thus building blocks in the person's "knowledge/truth" regarding him-/herself (McNamee 2001:1-15; McNamee 2004c:1-19). It is through the exchange of stories – the dialogical and relational process – that opportunities are created for agency, freedom, and the exploration of possibilities unique to a specific person (Anderson 1997:93-100; Epstein 1995:171-183; Epston 1993:183-189; Epston 1998; Epston & White 1994:37-74; Epston, *et al* 1999). Without the telling of the 'old' stories, 'new' stories cannot unfold. With enough new stories unfolding, new discourses can be built, new cultural narratives can be born – new possibilities, new days and new ways can be born (McNamee 2004a:1-36; McGill 1992).

The importance that the Social Construction discourse attributes to stories, discourse and language has heightened my awareness of the socially constructed nature of our experience of such practices as migration and the effects of language and discourse on our personal positioning regarding our migratory experiences. Would not conversing together allow us (me, other migrants and the authorities who 'control' migration) to make relational sense of the frequently denigrating practices associated with migration? What if the persons on both sides of the desk or interview window were to engage in more relational practices rather than the top-down practices normally associated with the process?

How we view our experiences might be restoried if we reconsidered our experiences and incorporated new ideas and discourses into our stories. What was previously viewed as less desirable possibly might be restoried into a narrative of overcoming or survival. White (1991:26-30) refers to these instances as "alternative stories", "unique outcomes" or "sparkling moments": developments in a person's life that facilitate the re-authoring of his/her life according to preferred stories. Frequently, these developments might not have been predicted by the person. For an event to qualify as a unique outcome, it must be regarded as eligible or relevant by the person to whose life the event relates. McNamee (2004a:1-5) describes these instances of restorying as "critical moments": one's going on together is re-authored, more relational possibilities are generated and potential transformations become conceivable or possible.

A person's local culture often includes attitudes and practices - such as patriarchy - that support a problem-saturated story. Within the migratory process a problem-saturated story would, for example, refer to a story of victimhood rather than a story of survival. Restorying involves excavating and uncovering new possibilities that would make the stories one is re-authoring thicker and more multi-stranded. Thus, within the migratory experience, what were the signs of overcoming rather than being overcome by circumstances? As persons construct their narratives, they search for small stories in their past that can help explain or account for more multi-storied options. Often persons miss these sparkling moments in their lives, either by ignoring them or seeing them as "not such a big deal." Repetition of the stories, thorough questioning about details in the stories, including more people in the stories, including other voices in the stories and including various perspectives from various people in the stories, all help to add to a more multi-layered version of the stories (Freedman & Combs 1996a:195; Gergen s.a.,s.l.; McNamee 2004b; White & Epston 1990:55-63).

2.5 Meaning(-making) and Meaning and Language

Social Constructionism thus refers to the idea that meaning is not discovered, but constructed when human beings engage with their world (Gergen 2001; McNamee 2004d:1-12). This does not mean, however, that the world did not exist before meaning was attributed to it. It merely refers to the view that the world only becomes intelligible once we attribute meaning to it. A tree was a tree prior to someone attributing the interpretation of 'tree-ness' to it. Its 'tree-ness' will, though, be differently understood by each person. Without persons contributing to the idea of 'tree', its 'tree-ness' will be meaningless. Social Constructionism thus refers to meaning being constructed rather than being absolute. Meaning is made within our in-tentionality. In-tentionality refers to the 'aboutness' of something: the reaching out towards or *in*to something. In my conceptualization about the 'tree-ness' of a tree, I make sense of its 'aboutness'. What is the tree-ness of a tree about? Only by reaching *in*to the meaning I attributed to the tree, can I grasp its tree-ness. On the most simplistic level, it refers to the in-tention of a tree being a tree as I interpreted it as being a tree. No one and ultimate truth informs my in-tentionality about (my reaching into) its 'tree-ness'. I become conscious of trees. Intentionality becomes the interaction between subject and object – our becoming conscious of something. This interactionality refers to the being-in-the world of human beings; the meaning-making we continually engage with. A logger would, for instance, ascribe a different tree-ness to a tree than that ascribed to it by a nature conservationist or an artist.

Reflection: I am sure Winnie the Pooh would understand my argument...
(Williams & Shepard, 1996)

Reflection on my Reflection: I think about how meaning and understanding presents itself. I think of how queuing and escalators are navigated in England. I think of my indignation at O.R Tambo airport when *everyone* did not automatically keep to the left of the escalator and how *everyone* did not automatically patiently await their turn in the queues...

The social source of meaning forms the bedrock of the thinking underpinning Social Construction. Although the term 'Social Construction' has come to mean many different things to many different people, all approaches seem to emphasize language as its form of representation. Hosking (2011) suggests that constructionisms vary in three main ways, depending on their focus on (1) socially constructed "products" or processes, (2) whether individuals or communal construction processes are centred, and on (3) the significance given to the knower's participation in those processes. Social Construction centres communal construction processes, as the co-constructing of other stories are foregrounded rather than the taking up of a "knowing" position.

Intelligibility about the world arises from the social meaning attributed to this world with which we interact in some way or another (McNamee 1996:1-7). The various cultures we join contribute to our awareness about the meanings of our emotions, thoughts and symbols as examples of our respective realities as a whole: "... social reality is, therefore, a function of shared meanings; it is constructed, sustained and reproduced through social life" (Greenwood 1994:85). All meaningful reality is thus socially constructed. The *social* in *Social* Construction refers to *how* meaning is constructed rather than *what* meaning is given to. This meaning generation is collective in its nature: it refers to the sense we make of something (Gergen s.a.,s.l.).

As we take concrete steps away from that which is signified by the Cartesian chain of reason and logic and from deterministic ways of doing, we deliberately join together to make meaning of the knowledges we gain within the relational activities in which we are engaged. In this way we create,

together, new ways of going on together. We make meaning through our collaborative activities (Gergen & Gergen 2004). Social Construction's notion that "*words create worlds*" has profound implications embedded in it. Nothing is real until we agree that it is. As stated before, this does not mean that nothing exists before we "speak it into being"; it merely indicates that when people speak about something, that something is always located within a certain cultural and relational relevance (see Chapter Four below).

As we communicate with one another, we are populating our world with meaning: the possibilities for innovation are endless. As persons who speak from a Social Construction point of view, we do not necessarily abandon all that has gone before, but we are free to make new meanings as we go on together in a relational way. If we assert that our construction of meaning arises from the relationships we hold, then it seems a short step towards referring to our constructions as *Relational Constructions* (Gergen 2009; Gergen, McNamee & Barrett 2001:1-14; McNamee & Shotter n.d.:1-25).

Hosking (2011) describes her understanding of the particularities about language and languaging, which contribute to Relational Construction, as an awareness that relating is a joint action which is constructed in language and other forms of action. Language is a coordinating act that invites, or not, other "acts." Whilst some of these acts become conventional, other relations are always possible. The processes involved in the coordination of the acts are always situated within a local-social-historical context. An assumption might arise that new meanings are always made within these coordinations, yet the coordinations may also limit the coordinations already in place or the creation of new coordinations. Hosking (2011) takes pains to explain how she regards language (communication) as fundamental to, and constitutive of, Relational Construction. Language is seen as a performative act, which brings persons and objects "into being." Relating, according to her, is co-constructed. This view is supported by authors such as Gergen (2009), Lannaman (1999), McNamee and Shotter (s.a.:1-25).

2.6 Reflection and Reflexivity

Social Construction inspires self(?)-reflexivity. Crotty (2010:49-51) juxtaposes the meanings that Claude Levi-Strauss, Norman Denzin and Yvonne Lincoln attribute to the idea of researcher-as-*bricoleur* to suggest that a true *bricoleur* is one who is able to take something and put it to a use for which it was not initially intended (Crotty 2010:51). A true researcher-as-*bricoleur* is a researcher who is able to "re-vision" the initial purpose of the researched (object/subject). It is someone who, whilst paying close and curious attention to the researched, can open up the researched to reinterpretation and thus make meaning. The reinterpretation opens up a world of multiplicity. Whilst the abovementioned reinterpretation leads the researcher to foreground the object/subject with curiosity, it does not incline towards individualism. The interpretation takes into account the social meaning and character of "the researched's" entity.

Social Construction thinking is more than just a new social paradigm: it is also a way of understanding knowledge from the perspective of the social processes through which it is created (Kotzé & Kotzé 1997:2-4). The Social Constructionist approach offers the possibility to draw a new framework in which all sorts of dualisms can be overcome. Social Constructionism can be viewed as an observer's experience, in which the movement (experience) of the observer is about the movement from the considering of the self(?) (individual) who interprets a universe, to the recognition of the self(?) as part of that social multiverse s/he is experiencing (Fruggeri 1999:44).

2.7 Our Worlds are Socially Constructed

Relational Construction has built on, but has not abandoned, the premise that our worlds are socially constructed, but pays more and closer attention to relationship and how relationship constitutes society and our being in society. The constructionist evolutionary process has thus progressed from construction, to Social Construction, to Relational Construction, the current preferred thinking in various circles.

We mostly use language to enable us to go on together. For a long time we have treated language as a form of picture (Gergen & Gergen 2004:14). When a word is said or indicated, a certain picture forms in the receiver's mind. By lending intelligibility to these received word-"pictures", we contribute to the carrying out of our relationships. The meaning we attribute to the words we use and receive is closely related to the culture in which the words are used. Wittgenstein (1974) refers to these instances of shared understanding as "language games" or "grammars" – the local conventions for describing and explaining. If one is outside of a particular language game, it becomes rather obvious that one does not fit into that particular culture as each group relies on a different language game or set of grammars. Different groups thus give importance to different aspects of differentiation. Wittgenstein refers to this way of going on together as *forms of life*. Gergen and Gergen (2004:15) ascribe the overtly deliberate skill of *double listening* to Social Constructionists – the constant listening for content and consequence.

> ***Reflection***: I am reminded of how hard I had to work to learn the language games of the British mental health world. The deadpan faces when, during the early days, I 'got it wrong' or asked a question with an 'obvious' answer. The sense of humiliation for not *really* belonging...

Listening for content and consequence raises question marks about what is accepted as fact and what is accepted as fiction. One might rightly ask: "Whose fact and whose fiction?" For instance, British Petroleum (BP) had a rather different view of the 'facts' surrounding the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico from the sufferers of the effects of this oil spill. Were BP's 'facts' perhaps bound more to fiscal interpretations than mere day-to-day survival in an environment where one was ecologically endangered? The USA Government and the British shareholders represented yet other bundles of 'facts' surrounding the oil spill. Where does the Truth lie when all these sets of 'facts' are configured?

C. SOME CRITICISM – RADICAL PLURALISM, INDIVIDUALISM & NIHILISM

1. *Radical Pluralism*

It seems appropriate at this stage to invite the notion of radical pluralism into the conversation to consider whether an openness to varied ways of naming and valuing might be a viable option. All the above 'facts' about the oil spill are real and true to each actor in the drama. As stated previously, our constructions are set within our different lives. Our different lives are (e)valuated by us. In the naming of our lives we open up the place for the (e)valuation of our lives. Should one then stand with the notion of "to each his own", which would imply a certain relativist position?

Social Constructionists prefer an act of relational dialoguing above a relativist position. Relational dialoguing would ask questions about how we could have a different kind of conversation that would enable us to mine for new meanings, new understandings and new possibilities that would allow us to go on together in a preferred way. Foucault (1977b:12-14; 1980) suggests that we forego the practice of binary oppositions and consider the possibilities embedded in the liminal space encapsulated in the in-between: to consider a stance of *both/and* rather than *either/or*, which enables one to move away from ultimate Truth claims.

Hosking (2011) asks us to remain in the *here and now* - within relational processing - which makes space for co-constructed meaning. This might include conversations regarding the multiple understandings possible within such ultimate Truth claims. Such conversations would necessarily make space for ongoing possibilities by taking into consideration those acts already languaged as well as making room for alternate actions. The latter sanctions the notion that Relational Construction does not endorse a relativist stance, but rather a stance of collaborative possibility seeking and co-understanding.

Holding ultimate Truth claims closes down possibilities. Totalizing statements of "this is that" limit the emergence of new meanings and new understandings. Conversations grown from a stance of collaboration continually multiply meaning expansion. Meaning expansion, in turn, makes space for a relationally constructed place which foregrounds the question of "How do we go on together?" and which welcomes pliable opinions situated in personal values. In this way, the possibility of creating a space where all ways of constructing the world, inclusive of all the incumbent personal and societal values, becomes a preferred way of being-in-the-world. A space is thus created where silenced voices can be heard. A space where new questions may be asked and new relationships pondered.

Where relational dialoguing becomes the preferred way of being together, suppression and oppression are negated, a place is created where anger, criticism and frustration fall away and where new understandings start to emerge. Trust grows in conversations where openness and the acceptance of the values and the truths of each party are allowed a space to breathe. These are some of the keystones of Relational Construction. Lock and Strong (2010:6) mention the respectfulness inherent to a co-joint way of being together in the meaning-making process; or, as Thich Nhat Hanh (1991:123) profoundly puts it: " In true dialogue, both sides are willing to change.... Guarding knowledge is not a good way to understand. Understanding means to throw away your knowledge ..."

2. *Individualism*

The Western world is characterized by individualism and a resultant strong sense of the self. While Relational Construction would not devoid individualism of any worth - after all, individualism is another way of going about life - nevertheless there are instances where individualism does not seem to satisfy. Relational Construction steps into this gap to offer alternative ways of going about life – ways where generative conversations and possibilities are offered from which a new going about life may be brought into being. Relational Construction offers the perspective that relationships, rather than individuals, make up the basis of society.

Gergen and Gergen (2004:31-34) regard meaning as coordinated action rather than as situated in the minds of individuals (Shotter 1980:28-65). As individuals we find ourselves caught up in hermeneutic circles in which each question creates another question and another question *ad infinitum*. These questions try to ascertain what it is that we are meaning *exactly* when we make statements from a place where we believe that the ultimate meaning is located within ourselves – within the individual. The Gergens propose that we endeavour rather to locate meaning within the relationship between persons. Here we might consider the following four ideas:

1. *A person's expressions in and of themselves have no meaning*: that meaning is only made within the meaning the hearer attributes to the expressions;
2. *The latency for meaning is only actualized through added action*: meaning is only made when a response to one's speech act is reciprocated in some way. If I wave at you, but you do not see me waving and thus do not respond to my wave, the wave did not realize its intended meaning.

3. *Added action itself needs an addition*: Any addition acts twice. In the first act it gives importance to what has gone before; but it also needs its own verification in return. An example would be:
   Joe: "Good morning, Anne."
   Anne: "Good morning, Joe."
   Joe: "Wa*tta3locXhuba.'"
   Within the regular pursuit of social interaction, Joe's response to Anne's greeting would be a nonsense. It would not grant importance to Anne's added action and in this way would nullify the meaning of the social interchange.

   We live our lives dialogically. We make sense of what goes on about us by what goes before and what comes after interchanges – a uniquely Derridian view of one's going about life. Gergen (2009a:134-138) explains his notion of multi-being by highlighting how it is that we are in constant conversation with others, even when we are on our own and involved with our private thoughts. Or, when we are reading, we are in conversation with the author and making meaning of what is being read. We co-evolve with one another by means of our relationships and the meanings we attribute within these relationships (Bateson 2010:129-146; Lock & Strong 2010:186). Shotter (1980:28-65) writes extensively about *joint-action* and *withness* and *going on together* that comes forth from being in relationship and in conversation in an intelligible way.
4. *Traditions do allow us options for meaning, but they do not establish what these meanings should be*: Cultural and traditional ways of responding come from times before and prompt our responses, but we do have options of how we choose to go on into the future. We are not determined by the past, merely influenced by it.

The notion of ourselves as individuals - with individual meaning-making, and meaning-making as individuals - arises out of the Enlightenment where this discourse was propagated and has now become part of our taken-for-granted knowledge. Essential to this discourse is the idea that our inner worlds (emotions, thoughts, memories and attitudes are the aspects which construct our lived worlds. In this way we contribute to an isolationist way of being in the world. Our successes are our *own* successes and our failures are *own* "failures." This inevitably contributes to our *own* depression and our *own* not-enoughnesses. In this individualist approach, we become our *own* worst critics. Success is inevitably *e*valuated – and not valuated - in terms of failure and failure always seems to win the race (Gergen 1994:212-214).

Paulo Friere (1978) reminds us that antagonistic critique is less helpful than constructive dialogue. It would not be stretching Friere's point to apply his assertion to our conversation with and about ourselves. As scholars preferring the Relational Construction way of going on together, we prefer to think about individualism in a different way. We ask questions about how we may reconstruct this way of antagonistic and critical thinking. Would it not be more useful to think of ourselves rather as in relation to others: self(?) through others rather than self(?) *versus* others (Gergen & Gergen, 2004:37)?

Ken and Mary Gergen (2004:38-42) note the following four propositions that might contribute to thinking of ourselves in more relational terms:

1. *The discourse of the mind is born in dialogue*: Within the individualist paradigm there is the notion that our words for our inner worlds are established/created due to the actual existence of these inner worlds. Through regular use in society these concepts (emotions, thoughts, memories and attitudes) have become implanted into our minds: they have now become "thoughts." A Relational Construction view would propose that our words and languaging – and thus the aforementioned concepts - come into being within relationships. The option is there to

engage with other, more generative, ways of conversing and doing relationships: ways which would offer other, less individualistic, options for thinking about ourselves.

2. *The discourse of the mind acquires its value through its use*: If we accept that our words and languaging come into being within relationships, we are also accepting that our words and languaging depend on our social use of the words and the language. The latter then prompts us to question how these words function within our relationships and what the social consequences are of our words and language usage. Spending time with young adults soon alerts us to how different words mean different things within different social contexts. Similarly, after spending nearly 10 years working in Forensic Mental Health hospitals I am quite desensitized to which words in the English language are regarded as offensive.
3. *Language is just one component of fully performed actions*: Words and language never stand alone – they are always accompanied by what goes before and what comes after them (Derrida 1981). Words and language are also always accompanied by what is popularly termed "body language" or the lack of body language. Practitioners of Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) describe body language as a language in its own merit. Often these actions (or "body languages") accompanying our words acquire the regularity of what could be termed *performances* (Gergen 2009a:102-106). A performance, in this context, refers to certain incidents, accompanied by a certain languaging set, which leads to a certain way of expressing oneself. Although these performances are mostly personally authentic, it is not impossible that they could be calculated to ensure a certain outcome. An example of a performance would be the greeting ritual between partners on any given occasion. Arguments frequently follow a certain "performance script." Arguments between partners are quite often rather remarkably similar.
4. *Performances are components of relational sequences*: Words acquire meaning by what goes before or what comes after (Derrida 1981). Similarly, performances have meaning in what goes before and in what comes after. Intelligible performances are mostly the result of joint action (Shotter 1980:28-65) where to-and-fro responses make up a performance. But one can nevertheless be involved in a performance whilst thinking or reading which most often is a solitary activity. In this instance the other partner/s within the performance are merely absent in body, but not in the mind of the thinker or the reader (Gergen 2009a:339-340).

Relational Construction offers the possibility to step out of performances by relationally reviewing the usefulness of a performance and then relationally considering a reconstruction of the performance. For example, by saying: "Do you think we might restart this conversation?" Being able to renegotiate our performances thus offers us generative ways of going on together. Rather than having to battle in isolation with our "personal mental states", we have the possibility of making sense of our being in the world through a relationally constructed lens. We have the option to relationally re-story our lives in ways that we find more useful and more preferable. In the relational collaboration with others, we find ourselves engaging in richer and more sustaining stories about ourselves – in this process new and longed for possibilities are constructed (White & Epston 1990).

3. *Nihilism*

There are no elemental errors or ultimate truths (Gergen & Gergen 2004:91). We need to stay mindful of these positions to enable us to not take a fundamental and exclusionary position about Relational Construction (Gergen 2009b:27; Lock & Strong 2010:6-11). Critique, including the critique about Relational Construction taking a nihilist position, and differences of opinion about Relational Construction are welcomed. These allow us opportunities for conversation and dialogue and offer occasions for progressive thinking about Relational Construction. It remains important to continue being mindful of the idea that preferring a Relational Construction way of thinking about

the world does not mean a stance of abandoning the phenomenon referred to as "truth"; it merely wishes to take a stance in favour of having a different kind of conversation where "truth" statements may be reviewed.

Relational Construction prefers to view truth claims of *all* kinds as a phenomenon stemming forth from the relationships within a specific culture and from a particular set of historical circumstances. Within certain circumstances, one would prefer certain truths to be verifiable. I would, for instance, prefer to know how far it would be from point A to point B so that I might plan for the journey. Certain universal truth claims, within their specific practice, are necessary for successful functioning. Relational Construction makes a case against local truths being accepted as universal truths, which then inevitably includes the concurrent expectation that these truths should replace all other possible considerations.

Reflection: I am reminded of a particular journey I undertook in Africa. I needed to get to the next village. I enquired how far the next village was. 'Not far', the Elder offered. 'How long will it take?' I asked. 'Not long', the Elder answered. The journey took me almost five hours by motorcar!

Gergen and Gergen (2004:94-102) draw our attention to the proposition that along with criticisms of nihilism, Relational Construction has also been criticised for not taking into account the evident facts of life. They make mention of three areas where these challenges from theorists referred to as Realist or Essentialist are rather fervent:

1. Some critics propose that the *human body* is pivotal to our understanding of social life: our bodies define us as we experience the world "through" our bodies.
2. Some critics propose that *the mind* is pivotal to our understanding of social life: emotions and thoughts govern our understanding of the world.
3. Some critics propose that *power imbalances* in society govern the world. Relational Construction's partiality to seeking generative options when dealing with occasions where power imbalances are prevalent is regarded as the acceptance of power perpetration.

The above criticisms offer the opportunity to consider how Relational Construction would go about reflecting on the stated assertions from a meta-level. The meta-level infers taking into account how we come to our epistemological/ontological conclusions. *Constructionists try to understand our understandings* (Gergen & Gergen 2004:96 – authors' italics). The Relational Constructionist stance of collaboration offers the following possibilities of working collaboratively with the critics:

1. *Join the reality making*: Relational Constructionists are open to considerations of various ideas (Gergen & Gergen (2004:96). Mind, body and emotion are included in everyday talk. Approaching such talk from a meta-theoretical point of view is what offers other possibilities for dialoguing in a generative way even as one includes all interlocutors in the conversation. This dialoguing takes into account the underlying truth status afforded to the talk about the mind, the body and the emotions.
2. *Explore limits together*: Words create worlds. It would be useful to consider together with the critics how the choice of words limits our possibilities as Relational Constructionists as well as the possibilities of the critics. Michael White (2000) used the notion of "totalising statements" in his work as a Narrative Practitioner. He preferred to language in a manner that offered options to his clients. For instance, he preferred to refer to a client as someone "struggling with depression" rather than someone who is "depressed." A struggle may be overcome. "Being depressed" has a sense of inalienability about it. Personal agency is stripped when totalizing statements are used (Davies 1991:42-53).

3. *Create new visions together:* When limits are recognized in collaboration with conversational partners, it seems hardly possible to not consider how such limits might be overcome. In this way, ongoing relationships are formed and new perspectives are stimulated.

Relational Construction has been charged with taking a relativist position and with moral relativism. Rather than advocating an abandonment of moral and ethical views, Relational Construction suggests that all conversational partners should be co-opted into generative dialogues about potentially opposing issues. In this way common ground may be forged where mutually acceptable moral and ethical practices may come into being. As morals and ethics are seen by Relational Constructionists to be cultural and societal constructions, such conversations offer the relational opportunity for the strengthening of communities and relationship around a coordinated matter (Burr 2008:178-200; Gergen 1994:65-92; Gergen 2004:220-241).

D. CONCLUSION

Chapter Three has offered us the opportunity to consider the history preceding Social Constructionism and that which gives it an its undeniably solid philosophical grounding. It also traces the surfacing of Relational Construction as a term which various authors regard as preferable to Social Construction. Chapter Three focuses our attention on the importance of language, discourse and performances and how these may inform our going on together. It reiterates Berger and Luckman's (1966:211) position that human reality is a socially constructed reality and that the continuous conversations between sociology, psychology, history and philosophy should continue to lend continuity to the inquiry of how we might live. Our attention has been drawn to how it might be preferable to choose the option of *relational dialoguing* rather than accepting and protracting ultimate truths (McNamee 2007:1-16). We touched lightly on some ideas about culture and meaning-making. Some of the criticisms brought against relational construction were also addressed.

The preceding, rather brief and limited, journey through the literature available about Social Construction lays a firm foundation for the inquiry as it considers the questions raised by means of the interviews with the participants, as well as my own experience. The challenge continues to be the invitation to finally step away from the inquiry and to think about the stories of migration in a less bounded and essentialist way. The challenge is to reframe, together, the 'I' in Identity into the 'U' in 'Us' in a generative, less restricting, less hurtful way.

In closing, the following is offered as a brief summary of Relational Construction:

- Relational Construction is concerned with the meaning(-making) and understanding of language acts.
- Relational Construction accepts that the meaning(-making) and understanding of language acts have their origins within social interchanges.
- These social interchanges do not occur only when two or more people are in contact with each other in some discernible way – the social interchanges may also occur in isolation, but are set within an imagined discernible social interchange. For example, when one is reading a book and imagines oneself in conversation with the author.
- Relational Construction proposes that meaning-making is specific to the cultural and historical influences and settings which give life to prevailing discourses.
- Relational Construction thinking prefers not to be viewed as proposing relativist, nihilist or essentialist paradigms.
- Relational Construction offers collaborative and participatory dialoguing as an alternative to the perpetration of power over (Ayvazian & Tatum 1996).

- Relational Construction thinking aligns itself with reflexivity when engaged with meaning(-making).
- The term Social Construction is used interchangeably with the term Relational Construction.

CHAPTER FOUR

Culture, Migration and Identity

**"You are not an observer,
you are a participant."**
Thich Nhat Hanh (Being Peace)

**"To think in terms of either pessimism or
optimism oversimplifies the truth.
The problem is to see reality as it is."**
(Thich Nhat Hanh (The Miracle of Mindfulness)

A. INTRODUCTION

My desire for this writing all along has been that it would transcend mere information by including a form of writing that embodies the relational aspects of our multiple ways of being. As Westerners, we have evolved into much bounded, individualised beings where our own privacy and our own personal sense of self is often spoken about in absolute terms (Gergen 2009a). The danger is that this writing will also fall prey to this boundedness: for the multi-vocality and multi-storiedness of our lived lives to become entrapped within those bonds and fetters which we impose on ourselves and on our minds, *albeit* for many, seemingly valid reasons.

I hope that in the discussion of culture, migration and identity - the three main aspects directing my writing - I will lay down a rampart which will allow me to step over the wall of boundedness that seems still set on encircling much of my thinking on these topics. I want to come to a place where I can re-story my experience of migration, make sense of the cultural enigmas I encountered personally and move into a place of identity that is not cemented as solidly into the concrete I have constructed around it. It would seem that it is only by examining what has already been written on culture, migration and identity that I will be able to step out from the cage of one-levelled thinking into a place where various possibilities can be considered. My aim is thus to get to know how others have written about these topics. I can then draw from this as I consider the implications and nuances of all the conversations - my own included - which follow in the next chapter.

B. CULTURE

> Precise definitions of this difficult, multi-faceted and capacious word somehow seem to elude us. The idea of culture is so tantalizingly out of reach, yet so necessary for us to grasp….the 'third spaces' that emerge between societies do not necessarily result in stable and coherent cultures with neat boundaries. Instead, fuzzy frontiers and complex, ambiguous and situationally specific forms of social interaction arise when culture and migration intersect. Culture and migration also connect in a more direct sense, creating what is sometimes called 'a culture of migration' or a 'migration culture' namely a considerable intensification, in certain settings, of dispositions and predilections that favour migration as a solution to social stasis, unemployment and relative deprivation.
>
> (Cohen & Jónsson 2011: xiii)

1. Culture as Non-Bounded Entities

Culture is unique to each person's experience and understanding. As unbounded authors we understand that there is no 'one-size-fits all' possibility where the term culture is concerned. In my search for a definition or category of culture, I was confronted with various descriptions, each influenced by the writer's perspective and discipline (for example, from anthropology, sociology, psychology, and governmental departments from across the world). Bringing people from different cultures together and engaging with them in a generative way allows for new meanings to be made. The stories individuals tell are what give meaning to their lives and what allows meaning-making for them. Their stories tell us more of what could possibly be constitutive of them. The mores and values persons hold develop within traditions of relationships. Quite possibly, the meaning or description of what culture constitutes develops within these relationships: culture develops from the traditions of relationships and becomes rooted within a group of people in a way that would allow a label of 'culture' to be ascribed to those arisen relationships.

As people migrate, they bring some of what is specific to their cultural ways to the area they are settling into. They absorb, in turn, the culture specific to the new area in which they find themselves. A sort of cultural cross-pollination takes place, which is enriching to all. For Cohen (2010:4), culture is something that can be described in many ways: for instance, how group members behave, their attitudes, their values and beliefs, and the ways of communication (language or physical gestures, music, arts, dance) which they share. Cohen stresses that culture is also embedded in the patterns of a group's daily lives: how and what they eat, how they dress, their traditions and celebrations. She makes special note of culture as being a group and individual unifying factor, as well as something that gives identity to a group or individual.

Cohen and Jónsson (2011: xxvi) suggests that the "separate cultures" tradition has now given way to the ideas that all cultures have "permeable edges, fuzzy boundaries", constantly being reinvented and renegotiated. With the possibility to connect by various means, the experience of mobility affects most of the world's population.

Gergen (2009a:20-27) describes the culture of the "bounded being." He considers the notion of bounded being to refer to our sense of being bound by our skins, of being individuals and of how everything of import lies within us. He mentions that Foucault proposed that our sense of being bounded beings allows others to dominate us. Following Foucault, Berger and Luckmann (1966:58) suggest that: "institutions are now experienced as possessing a reality of their own, a reality that confronts the individual as an external and coercive fact." The latter confronts us with an almost Orwellian (1950) sense of the individual versus Big Brother. When we focus on the self(?), the bounded being, the significance of relationships is diminished: we focus instead on what it is that we want and only view the relationship in terms of how it can possibly contribute to this. Much of what we read about culture comes from this more instrumentalist point of view and less from a relational point of view. This inquiry will strive towards a more relational view of culture. If meaning emerges through the relational - through collaborative action - could we not also expect the same from cultural meaning and understanding? Spradley and McCurdy (1972:7) speak about the "omnibus definition of culture" - the definition of culture as "being nearly everything that has been learned or produced by a group of people." I tend towards an assumption that such production can only happen within relationships.

2. Meaning-Making in Culture

It has been evident throughout my own migratory experience and the migratory experiences of those whom shared their stories with me (see Chapter Six below), that emotions played a large part throughout our collective meaning-making about our migratory experiences and, consequently, how we see ourselves. Yet various cultures view emotions differently. In my conversation with Kon, he spoke in a rather pragmatic manner about his experiences. I envied his calm, rational attitude: my own passionate, agitated, 'wronged' view has invited much distress into my life. And yet, by naming his external demeanour as 'pragmatic' I would be interpreting his cultural heritage from my own cultural perspective. Even generalising from my perspective that his pragmatism was evidence of his culture could also be viewed as a step too far. We need to ponder the question whether viewing all kinds of things through a cultural lens perhaps puts us into a very specific kind of prison. Would attempting to engage with others in a relational way - where generative conversations can be shared and meaning making be sought together - not also be creating culture in and of itself? Is culture not also an example of a bounded being? Do we not also become examples of isolationist, individualist behaviour when we strive to mark our territory by playing the culture card? Is culture possibly linked to an attempt to find and solidify an identity for ourselves (Freedman & Combs 1996:265-268)?

3. Inquiring into Culture

Chang (2008:15-31) suggests that the concept of culture fundamentally affects how we conduct a cultural study, as it shapes how we will go about the process of an inquiry. She chooses to focus her writing about culture on the concepts of culture that see persons as interactive agents. She notes, however, that culture is often viewed as that which is particular to a group of people – boundaries like nationality, ethnicity, language and geography. Culture may also be viewed from an individualist point of view – what is particular to me. Such an individualist perspective makes us aware that people are not blind followers of culture, or of a predefined set of social norms, values or morals. Individuals have the autonomy to interpret the cultural input from various areas and select what they choose to include in their personal repertoire, while, at the same time, staying in touch with social expectations. Where then is culture located? Out there or in here? Within myself or in the society I am part of, or possibly both/and? I believe that culture is a group-based disposition. Culture comes forth from group-based activities – relationships. The individualist view of culture refers then not to culture's locus as within the individual, but merely as the individual's view or experience of culture and includes the individuals contribution to the amalgam of what constitutes culture. The individual's view of culture need not come forth from face-to-face interactions, but can be influenced by various means of communications, such as the media of all kinds. Culture tends to need our presence as individuals. Together we co-create the other and thus engage in meaning making.

Chang (2008:21-23) offers seven contributors towards the understanding of culture. (1) "Individuals are cultural agents, but culture is not all about individuality." Culture needs many individuals to come into being. (2) "Individuals are not prisoners of culture." We have options as to what we incorporate into our ways of being. (3) "Despite intergroup diversity, a certain level of sharedness, common understanding, and/or repeated actions is needed to bind people together as a group." A sense of connectedness between persons is needed for a certain culture to form. At the time of this writing I am part of a seminar at the University of New Hampshire. A certain 'culture' has emerged within this seminar. It is noticeable how certain patterns and positions are negotiated within the weekly meetings and what the ethos is within these meetings. (4) "Individuals can become members of multiple social organisations concurrently." (5) "Each individual contributes to the cultural makeup of individuals with varying degrees of influence." We can choose to come and go from the confines of a cultural grouping. When I need to travel, I wish to use my British passport as

that opens doors with an ease that a South African passport never could. At that time, I am firmly British. When I return to South Africa, I am firmly South African, as that is the 'me' that I wish to present to the customs control officer. I select and deselect where I position myself. At this very moment, I desire to be able to select myself into the American culture. This raises the question: What, *exactly*, would allow me to describe myself as an American and as selected into the American culture? Citizenship? A green card? A job? Marriage to an American national? Paying taxes to an American Inland Revenue Service? Upholding American customs like pledging my allegiance to the American flag and having an American flag on a pole outside my house? What? (6) "Individuals can discard a membership of a cultural group with or without 'shedding' their cultural traits." I certainly decided to shed my membership of a certain fundamentalist church group, as I became aware that one truth does not fit all. Yet, at the time, this shedding did not take away from my South African cultural view of myself, even though belonging to a recognised religious group is very much part of being South African. (7) "Without securing official memberships in certain cultural groups, obvious traits of membership, or members' approvals, outsiders can acquire cultural traits and acclaim cultural affiliations with other cultural groups." I am reminded of two instances where this notion may be refuted. I choose to describe myself as an African woman. I come from Africa. I wish to identify with the strength that the notion of being an African woman epitomises for me. Whilst living in the UK, I was often asked where I am from. I would always answer by saying: "I am an African woman." My words would frequently be countered with: "But you are not black." On the plane home from Geneva during October 2011, I sat next to a (black) Zimbabwean woman who was married to a British man and who had lived and worked in England for the past 25 years. When I told her that I see myself as an African woman, she was most aggrieved and voiced her displeasure quite vociferously: "You cannot call yourself African. You are not black. You have not gone through the struggle." Really? Does the fact that I was raised by a black woman not give me any claims to the heritage I prefer for myself? Would I, then, rather be described as an 'edgewalker'? As someone with different cultural experiences, but not really belonging to any of these communities I had interacted with?

4. Cultural Belonging

Kreb (1999:1) describes edgewalkers as being comfortable within a certain culture, competent with regards to flourishing in that culture, having the capacity to dip in and out of various cultures, and the capacity to generalise from one's own experience to the cultural prerequisites of the grouping where one finds one's self at a given time. Edgewalkers turn differences into similarities and thus cross-pollinate cultures in a way that affects both parties – a mutually transformational process. The latter fits with Swartz's (1998) view of the interconnected world where one held 'truth' should not supersede all other possible meanings and experiences. Although Swartz writes about mental health in South Africa, her message is clear. She states that it is necessary to think culturally about human experience by asking how individuals negotiate their lives in a rapidly changing world. She advises that it is useful to negotiate together an understanding of how individuals make meaning about how their cultural particularities fit within a world where things are shifting all the time and where the otherness of things outside of the usual, the known, the practised, needs to be incorporated into their lives.

At present questions about culture seem to be rather evocative as they are often equated to questions of identity (Rosaldo 1993: xxi). This evocativeness is necessarily informed by one's personal politics of identity and community. As the notion of personal culture and identity is often emotionally laden, you should thus consider your social relations to make sense of your emotional experience. The more you come to an understanding of the interaction between your social interactions and your emotional experience, the more likely it becomes that your symbolic webs of meaning will gradually thicken and grow. The thickening of your understanding is intricately linked

to how thickly you describe what matters most to you. It is through understanding that we can reposition ourselves and thus more fully insert ourselves into the fibres of our lives, whilst we hold tentatively what it is that we may believe about ourselves at any given time. All interpretations are provisional: this includes our beliefs about culture and identity of self and others. This realisation should underpin our search for understanding.

Whilst it is important to come to an understanding of how we position ourselves within our own emotionality, identity and culture, it would be wise to not transpose that understanding onto other cultures. We need to navigate our manoeuvres within different cultures with an informed tentativeness rather than an 'all-wise' and 'better-than' attitude. I am reminded of how during 2000, whilst still living in South Africa, I attended a workshop presented by an 'expert from abroad'. Her writing had informed much of what I had read during my training as a Narrative Practitioner. She is generally seen as an important contributor to the academic arena, which would explain her invitation to speak with authority on her topic. But unfortunately, quite contra to her writings I had read before and since, the presenter proceeded to advise on how we should go about managing our lives as South Africans. Her stance evoked much voiced and not-voiced anger amongst the workshop attendees. Her *unchallengeable* expertise about certain personally not lived or experienced aspects did not translate well into her presumed knowing about a different culture where different overtly and covertly negotiated meanings were present. She came as the expert and offered her expert position without the light touch one would have expected her to offer when reading her work. Unfortunately, the dichotomy represented by her being-in-person and her being-as-writer still imbues me with a certain cynical suspicion of written work that smacks of all that is good and wholesome.

5. Cultural Components

Rituals form part of a culture's identity and are deeply encapsulated in a culture's wisdom. How we position ourselves within our observation of cultures and their rituals enable and inhibit our insights. It is important to note here that rituals in and of themselves do not convey meaning or culture. They may often simply be vehicles for platitudes to be acted out. Rituals could thus often be the carriers of the processes that appear before and after their performances: for example, a funeral ritual.

This inquiry is an invitation to myself, and possibly others, to expand my sense of human possibilities and to shift my own understanding away from that of boundedness to a place where the relational is of primary interest – to a place where 'me' becomes 'we'. During this transition, healing might become possible, as well as an acceptance that different people do things differently. Having said that though, it is important to remain aware that how it is that we see and do things is culturally informed: even our innermost thoughts are populated by our cultural ways, norms, morals and values. "Culture lends significance to human experience by selecting from and organizing it…. It does not inhabit a set-aside domain" (Rosaldo 1993:26). Culture is all-pervasive. It encompasses every aspect of our lives. It spans the whole spectrum, including all that lies between the ridiculous and the sublime, the mundane and the esoteric. Cultural practices make sense in the living of our everyday lives. Despite this, cultural practices are not genetically encoded, but learnt through trial and error.

6. Rites of Passage

I underwent my rite of passage when I moved to England. I thought I had a firm grip on what the culture entailed, but I got a severe whipping for my lack of knowledge about the prevailing language-games. This rite of passage was re-enacted when I came back to South Africa after a lengthy period away. I am involved at present in my rite of passage as an edgewalker (Kreb 1999:1). This term suits me well, although I still have to ponder it in all its nuances. I have a sense that it may be hugely

contributing to my healing. I have knowledges and experiences which I can manipulate to suit me under various circumstances. My expectations of life and the plains on which my acceptance of myself are situated are starting to change: they are shifting to a safer place with less 'me' and more 'we'. I prefer to move towards a place where I ask how we might tango together to another beat rather than insist on doing the twist on my own. I have been sitting in the crowd for a long, long time, whilst licking my wounds. I am getting ready to join the dance of the edgewalker.

I hold the idea that this might be what Geertz (1973) might be meaning by his idea of the "refiguring of social thought." He also makes mention of how the culture of ethnography has changed in their conceptualisation of the object of analysis, the language of analysis and the position of the analyst. The detached observer has now become part of the observation, especially by virtue of such practices as Auto (Relational) Ethnography. Here the experience-near takes pride of place above the experience-distant of the past. Geertz could quite possibly be seen as one of the main contributors to the move away from describing an experience as 'cultural' to the dismantling of this notion in favour of understanding that 'taken-for-grantedness' does not necessarily imply a cultural underpinning. In other words, the notion of the social scientist has moved to a place of not-knowing, embracing the otherness and allowing for difference to be upheld, rather than pushing all meaning and experience under the cloak of culture (Brunner 1986).

7. What Constitutes Culture?

Lechner and Boli (2005:1-6) tell how the history and development of the Olympic Games tells a story of world culture. World culture is the culture of a world society, comprising of norms and knowledge shared across state boundaries, spurred by market forces, carried by the infrastructure of world society and expressed in multiple ways. For instance, the 2010 Soccer World Cup is still spoken of in almost sacred terms in South Africa. Many ordinary activities contribute to make the world one place. For instance, the world's infrastructure (e.g., air travel); economy (e.g., stock markets); state system (e.g., country borders); law (e.g., criminal exchange agreements); global problems (e.g., global warming) are all deeply cultural in nature. Following Berger and Luckmann (1966), Lechner and Boli (2005:16) describe culture as "socially shared symbolic and meaning systems that become embedded in objects, organisations and people yet also exceed what particular individuals can grasp and accumulate in an increasingly systematic fashion." They point out that culture is often spoken of in abstract terms. They prefer to think of culture as referring to "conceptions of the nature of things, principles of social organization, norms regarding proper behaviour, patterned 'habits' or 'folkways', and similar ideas." They remind the reader that culture operates in and through language and that language is inherently abstract. Are we not here describing a concept that is principally tautological in its nature – the one being the other and not able to be without the other? Yet, culture is also embedded in the world around us - in the objects, actors, scenes and structures whose nature are culturally organised: for example, an organisation. Culture also lies in socialisation, acculturation, and learning. Culture is being produced as I type. I am engaging in the culture of being a Ph.D. student preparing my dissertation for (e)valuation. The question still remains: What *is* culture? Yes, it is brought into being by language. Yes, it is group-dependent. Yes, it is found in its artefacts. Yes, it is constituent of so much more …. Let us continue exploring.

It would be negligent, however, not to mention that although culture encompasses all of the above, unfortunately it is not a topic of consensus only. Most of the disputes of the day - global and local - are enfolded within cultural terms. Frequently what unites in the one instance might be what divides in the next. The press might serve as an example. Within their corps they can be intensely divided in the competition of being awarded the Pulitzer Prize (although the getting of the Pulitzer Prize-story might be a culture in itself!), but if one of their fellow-press persons should be abducted,

they are unified in their indignation. The culture of the press world is suddenly one in an altogether different way: the culture of all for one and one for all permeates their world.

Lechner and Boli (2005:27) hold a particular view of culture. They regard culture as socially constructed with a socially shared symbolism. They prefer to interpret culture from an approach that considers how culture is created and how consciousness is formed. This would infer that once culture is created, culture has a dynamic all of its own. In many instances we can speak of the 'McDonaldization' of the world. I have not been to a country where I have not come across a McDonalds. The culture of McDonalds is changing, nevertheless, to keep up with the world trend/culture of fighting obesity. Where it was once the epitome of fast food, McDonalds is now switching its image to a health conscious food option. There are many other instances of cultures changing to incorporate what seems to have become more appropriate and more acceptable. The notion of culture thus seems to be quite oblique in its swaying along with what is deemed the flavour of the day. But to offer the explanation that culture is not static might be a slightly misguided representation of the notion of culture. Culture ebbs and flows with the voices who speak into the formations and transformations of what we deem to be culture. We thus find ourselves back once again with the rather tautological idea that language is constructive of culture, but without culture there would be no language. The one informs the other.

Culture grows and diversifies daily. We see it at the local, the regional, the national and the international levels. The McDonalds example suffices here. Each of us embodies a certain culture consisting of the local, the regional, the national and the international. We bring specifics to these cultures we represent, but we also walk on the edges of many cultures without being aware of the fact. For instance, I found the Taiwanese children to be 'Americanised' in many of their ways and desires because they had watched American TV whenever the chance presented itself. I remember when Barack Obama was elected president. TV presenters from all over the world descended onto the village in Kenya his father hails from. After those days of hype and global invasion that village will quite possibly now never regain the rural and unaffected nature in which it had existed for centuries.

Anderson and Schlunke (2008:xxii) address the matter of culture in a pragmatic way that appeals to me. They see culture and cultural studies as that which helps us to understand and create the meaning we make regarding our embodied everyday lives. It allows us to think through why and how a practice is enacted and perpetuated within a certain culture. When we become aware of the practices of culture, we can construct ourselves as ethically and politically aware and thus potentially able to effect change. As a feminist writer, effecting change is the object of this exercise for me. We must remain aware that there is never only one 'true' representation of our experience and our reality. In its original form 'representation' referred to a piece of art, a building or something 'real', something one could see and touch. But representation has evolved to mean the representation of something, someone, the world. In this process we create or shape the world we are attempting to represent. Thus 'representation' is ultimately an attempt to 're-present' the world: to make the familiar strange and the strange familiar; to create space within this diaphanous construction called 'culture' in which there is an accepted place for all, irrespective of the description we have adopted.

Kendal and Wickham (2001), aware that culture is a complex issue and not easily defined, nevertheless describe culture as a process of ordering. Culture can be the study of anything. It started out as the study of cultivating – agriculture. I walked into the Student Centre on the UNH Campus yesterday. There was a poster on the wall inviting all those interested to a meeting of the Multicultural Sorority. The first thought that went through my mind was whether this Sorority consists of one person celebrating all the bits of culture that come to a confluence within her being-

in-the-world? Or was it about many people from different ethnic groups mingling? Or could it be about an all-American group sharing their awareness that they represent many, many different variations of what could contribute to the notion of culture? I realised that these questions to self-represent what makes attaining a definition of culture almost impossible. Culture is all of this, but also all of that – both/and rather than either/or. Kendall and Wickham (2001:2) use Foucault's idea of governmentality to support their notion of culture as order or ordering. Governmentality refers to the self-government of people rather than the governing of societies by the government. It also means asking 'Why' questions rather than 'How' questions.

8. Culture and Feminism

It would be remiss to write from a feminist perspective and not also to include feminist voices within the considerations about culture. Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797) was described as a neurotic with penis-envy and as irrational because "females were disinclined towards rational thinking and behaviour" (Thornham (2000:19). These descriptions of Mary reveals how the view which regarded females/women as unable to indulge in coherent and cogent thought was rife in her culture. In her writing Wollstonecraft seems to frequently oscillate between two positions: firstly, she writes in a way which can be understood as an embodied representation of her position as a feminist, and secondly, though, she writes in a way which is more of a reflection of the prevailing societal nuances about how women *should* conduct themselves, *should* accede to what is expected of them and how women *should* vocalise their opinions about how they were affected by the patriarchal attitudes perpetrated upon them. Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860-1935) and Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) offer other examples of women caught in the same double-bind. They write and speak as women and are discounted for this very reason. This doubling back on themselves gave their critics the ammunition they needed to disregard them as 'merely female' - a cultural discourse that unfortunately is still fairly obvious within many cultures to this day. For example, female clitoral mutilation; and the position, or rather non-position, of many women in India. Kristof and WuDunn (2010) offer us various examples of the subjugation of females in this very day and age. Simone de Beauvoir's (1908-1986) *The Second Sex* (1949) is a seminal text where feminism and cultural theories mingle. Although not writing in the first person, de Beauvoir nevertheless uses herself as an example of the suppression of female thinking and writing. She alludes to the tensions between theory and experience, between her ideas about cultural construction and her accounts of the body. She also addresses the situatedness of women versus the philosophical neutrality they are afforded. It is important to recognise that women had no choice. Subjugated groups still do not have choice. How do we account for this conundrum when we attempt to define culture? Do we leave it between the cracks, as it is too messy to touch? Does it find itself within the abovementioned tautological nuance umbrellaing the notion of culture? Is culture because we speak it so? If we do not speak it, does it fall outside the parameters of culture?

9. Cultural Intolerance

Would the speaking and acting into being of our cultural ways account for cultural intolerance? Does the ownership we speak and act into being by our adherence to our personal and group cultural ways contribute to our perceived superiority, intolerance and frequent persecution of those different to ourselves? Do we make use of cultural coercion in big ways and little ways? Cultural coercion refers to the use of force or threat to get people to change their cultural values, beliefs or expressions (Cohen 2010:20). Within any culture there is always a desire to preserve and protect what makes it unique: its language, clothing, food, traditions, religious practices and beliefs, it humour, its art along with so many other aspects of uniqueness.

I was brought up in a largely Afrikaans-speaking home where many of the Calvinist doctrines and mores were overtly and covertly at play. Both my mum and dad were brought up in the Dutch

Reformed Church, where Calvinism continues to play a major part. My father's personal work ethic was a rather hard act to follow. My family was an example of how the Afrikaner was socialised: if you want to achieve something, you have to work, work, and work and then work some more. This way of being in the world was pervasive during the years of Apartheid and sanctions. As a country, South Africa had to change many of its more colonial ways to survive being cut off from the economies of the rest of the world. My personal work ethic continued to be reflected in England. At various times I have had the privilege of working alongside other South Africans residing in England. I often heard the rest of a specific team refer to us (South Africans) as 'Poppies'. At first, I found it strange that they would know this word. In Afrikaans the word '*poppie*' refers to a little doll. South African men would often refer to women as '*poppies*', which had the connotation of being desirable. I did not know why Sabrina (a fellow South African) and I were being referred to as '*poppies*'. But when I asked Sabrina she explained: "They are not calling us '*poppies*'. They are being horrible. They call us that because we keep on popping up, we work too hard and they are shown up." Hawkesworth (2006:9) warns against exactly this "… the morally objectionable practice of treating a person as a means rather than as an end, as inert matter rather than as [an] autonomous subject." She suggests that we should remain aware of those social processes that invite racialisation and gendering through which relations of power and forms of inequality are constructed and maintained.

10. Cultural Assimilation and Integration

Cultural assimilation and integration nevertheless continues to take place. The mixing of different cultures is mostly a natural progression from the place of fear of and anguish about the adopted culture. Often, generative relationships and conversations help this assimilation process along. Another aspect of integration becomes tangible for second generation children of migrants. These children are born into the adopted culture of their parents. Whereas their parents may still prefer to cling to the identities they retain from their culture of origin, their children may be otherwise inclined. They want to be accepted into what they know best and may resist pressure from their parents to conform and hold onto 'the old ways'. Lahiri (2004) writes beautifully about this phenomenon in *The Namesake*. It is, however, possible that the opposite may occur – parents adopt the new culture and discard 'the old ways' whilst their children covet the recreation of their parental culture (Cohen: 30-31). In most instances though, a fusion of the cultures lend an identity to the family that becomes an acceptable way of being: the richness of both/and ensues for both the community and the individual.

11. Culture - Summary

In closing this section on culture, it is important firstly to note that not everyone internalises the dominant cultural values in their society. In the same vein, it has to be said that not all behaviours are mediated by beliefs and values, i.e., culture (Chui & Hong 2006:318). Many instances prevail where individuals will admit that they have acted in a way other than their usual going about their business. Secondly, it would be prudent to attempt to summarise what it is that I consider to be contributing to the notion of culture as we have come to know it. Having stated the latter, however, we need also to take heed of Cohen and Jónsson's (2011: xiii) warning that the popular uses of the word culture are inconsistent as the study of culture is divided between disciplines and traditions, as stated previously. They inform us that, on the one hand culture refers to a totalising, universal concept that includes very large entities such as empires and civilisations; on the other hand, culture refers to the particularities definitive of a society, with each feature of that society acting as a mirror to that which is contra to that feature. For each culture there is a sub-culture or anti-culture. (For example, feminism and anti-feminism.) These sub-cultures or anti-cultures also share a set of norms, values and behavioural patterns that mark them out as other.

According to Jenks (1993:10), culture is one of the two or three most difficult words in the English language: it is a topic so complex and so divergent that it defies a definition. And yet the theory of culture is situated in our everyday discourse; due to this single, abiding fact, we do need to make some sense of it. How will we go about working with the notion of culture if we do not attempt to understand its complexities, its multi-vocality and multi-storiedness? Our reflexive investigations of the concept of culture are infused with our present-day experiences with and about culture. We cannot step away from the discourses surrounding culture without acknowledging how embroiled we personally are in its being. We co-create culture as we breathe - we are part of its history, its present and its future. Whether we physically move from one 'culture' to another or not, we are formative of culture:

> Culture… does not merely entertain, it enriches and uplifts, it embodies a struggle in its inception and in its apprehension which itself involves the maximization or even the extension of human potential. As such, culture is not to be treated lightly, it cannot be released into a pool of generalities or dissolved within a postmodern mood of relativism.
>
> (Jenks 1993:13)

A historical overview of culture seems to suggest that culture, during its earlier phases, was seen as being more set on the differentiations embedded within a collective than that which gathered it together as a collective. Jenks (1993:24-26) mentions four specific elements of culture, namely: (1) Culture is cerebral/cognitive. It becomes intelligible as a general state of mind. (2) Culture is a more embodied and collective category. It invokes a state of intellectual or moral development in a society. (3) Culture as a descriptive and concrete category. This aspect is linked to the arts and intellectual capital associated with a collective - its artefacts and everything associated with artefacts. (4) Culture as a social category. It refers to the whole way of life of a collective. These elements offer a sound summary of those components of culture offered by most other authors on the topic.

Sayad (2004) eloquently asks the question about which culture the migrant belongs to? He notes that migration is constitutive of both immigration and emigration and thus both the culture of origin and the culture of destination should form part of the identities constructed for and by the migrant. He suggests that the Algerians in France are marked by a "double absence." In this one phrase Sayad (2004) seems to have captured what migrants often tell about their migratory experiences. But it is also possible, however, that a co-construction of new meanings and new goings on together can step into this "double absence" in a way that facilitates belonging in a different, but equally real, way. Identity is not bound to location; culture is not bound to location and boundaries. Culture makes meaning in relationship about going on together in the world. Culture is permeable, even in homogenous groups. When I visited Zabar's, an authentically Jewish establishment, with Gita whilst visiting New York City, I observed exactly this: the permeability of culture and the acceptance of the other when conversations ensue. Lived practices make place for the other and, in this way, all parties go away from the interaction enriched. Language and meaning was negotiated even though a shared language was present. In Taiwan I noticed how language can be invented and understanding created when all parties were aiming at the same goal. The presence of a shared language makes meaning-making easier, but the absence of a shared language does not exclude conjoint meaning-making. In this way cultures are being constantly re-negotiated and re-invented. Boundaries become political tools rather than personal ideologies: for example, The Berlin Wall or the re-drawing of certain demographic boundaries in Sudan.

Should we conclude by allowing for the notion that culture is a symbolic system? Such a system would allow us to make sense of our relational interactions that either draw us together or push us away or allow us to make new meanings together and thus forge a variation of what has gone

before? Would my story about a Day in London, at the beginning of this chapter, be indicative of how cultures mingle, how relational meanings are made and of how differences are noted and included or rejected? Would the former be an argument for cultural relativism, where what is preferred is incorporated at one time and possibly rejected at another? Or would a certain cultural essentialism – where cultures are encamped within certain boundaries – be preferred? I believe that the acceptable lies within the both/and made possible when the relational is embraced and binary oppositions are dispersed. With the dispersion of the binary oppositions, the distinctions between 'us' and 'them' are negated and the arena is opened up for more relational ways of being together. This would be my preferred choice. Culture can divide; this remains true. Yet, conversation includes shared meaning-making where divisions were initially rife. It celebrates connections, whilst standing against the boundedness of this or that. It speaks of emergence - an embodiment of possibilities and the co-creation of the other and another – a 'new' culture. I prefer this latter way – the way of the edgewalker. The inclusionary way as opposed to the exclusionary way …

C. MIGRATION

"I feel like I had two lives. You plant something in the ground, it has its roots, and then you transplant it where it stays permanently. That's what happened to me. You put an end … and forget about your childhood; I became a man here. All of a sudden, I started life new, amongst people whose language I didn't understand….[It was a] different life; everything was different … but I never despaired, I was optimistic."

"And this is the only country where you're not a stranger, because we are all strangers. It's only a matter of time who got here first."

LAZARUS SALAMON
HUNGARY
ARRIVED IN 1920 • AGE 16

Figure 1: From Veronica Lawler (1995:32-33), I was dreaming to come to America. Memories from the Ellis Island Oral History Project.

1. Migration – A Positioning

At the outset of this section on migration, I have to state that my discussion on migration will be limited to migration across national borders – *international* migration - whilst recognising that this is not the only type of migration prevalent in the world. It would be prudent to consider what has been written on the topic of migration, even though this consideration would necessitate reflecting on a more individualist, deterministic discourse of migration. Moreover, it would be prudent to discuss both the various categories of migration generally used by authors on migration, as well as those used by the authorities regulating migration. An explanation of the various migrant categories will contribute greatly to the understanding of what is meant when a certain term is used. For the purposes of summarising the categories of migration, I mainly, but not exclusively, look to Koser (2007).

2. Migrant Categories

There are three main ways of categorising international migrants: (1) The distinction between *voluntary* and *forced* migrants. (Gonzalez (1992) refers to this category of migrants as 'conflict' migrants). Forced migrants are people who have been forced to leave their countries due to conflict, persecution or environmental reasons. These migrants are normally referred to as refugees, but do not include all forced migrants. (2) People who leave for *political* or *economic* reasons. Those who leave for political reasons are also normally referred to as refugees. A refugees is a person who, "owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his/her nationality" (Koser 2007:71). Economic migrants can also be described as labour migrants – those who leave to find work, better job opportunities and better working conditions. Economic migrants can be divided into two categories: low skilled migrants and highly skilled migrants. In amongst these categories are *social* migrants – those persons whom join migrants from another category, like spouses and children who join their migrant spouses and/or parents. Benson and O'Reilly (2011:71-88) describe the need for economic migration as "lifestyle migration" – the seeking of better opportunities. (3) The final category involves *legal* and *illegal/irregular* migrants. Koser (2007:6) prefers the term *irregular* migrant to that of illegal migrant as it seems less pejorative. Illegal/irregular migrants normally enter a country without documents, or illegal (forged) documents or stay on after their visas or work permits have expired. An irregular migrant can apply for asylum and thus be deemed an *asylum seeker*. *Temporary* migrants are those migrants who live abroad, but are set on returning to their place of birth at some stage. There are far more people, however, who have fled their homes, but are unable to leave their countries. These are referred to as *Internally Displaced Persons* (IDPs). These above distinctions can become blurred as circumstances change for individuals. One way to stop this classification is by returning home. "Home" is normally regarded as one's country of origin/birth. Another way is to become a citizen of one's destination country. The process of obtaining citizenship differs between most countries. Some countries allow for dual citizenship and thus the migrant does not have to give up his/her original nationality. Dual citizenship has led to the emergence of *transnationalism* – living in-between nations.

Lessinger (1995:71-72) remarks that, "Current research sees the impetus to migration as more complex both for individuals and for entire groups of people. Often push and pull factors operate simultaneously….*and there is no single profile of a typical migrant*" [italics added]. This informs my position that all migrants cannot be treated as equal due to the idea that they fit under some administrative typology. Migrants are more than passive reactors to outside forces and to the manipulations of the world. Brettell (2008:120) continues with her re-interpretation of the typologies imposed on migrants by stating that transnationalism might rather be viewed as persons who freely move back and forth between different cultures and societies at will – migrants are not uprooted, but agents free to make their own decisions. She refers to a new kind of diaspora in motion, comprised of persons who occupy an in-between space of identity, culture and communication. The latter reminds me that I prefer to be thought of as a 'link between' rather than a pawn or a victim. I would prefer to be seen as someone who can use my memory of various communities and cultures to construct and create new possibilities for where it is that I find myself. Moving from the outsider position to the insider position, though, requires an acceptance from the larger community. This move is a both/and operation. *Both* the individual *and* the society need to engage with the process for it to have a chance of it becoming co-constructive.

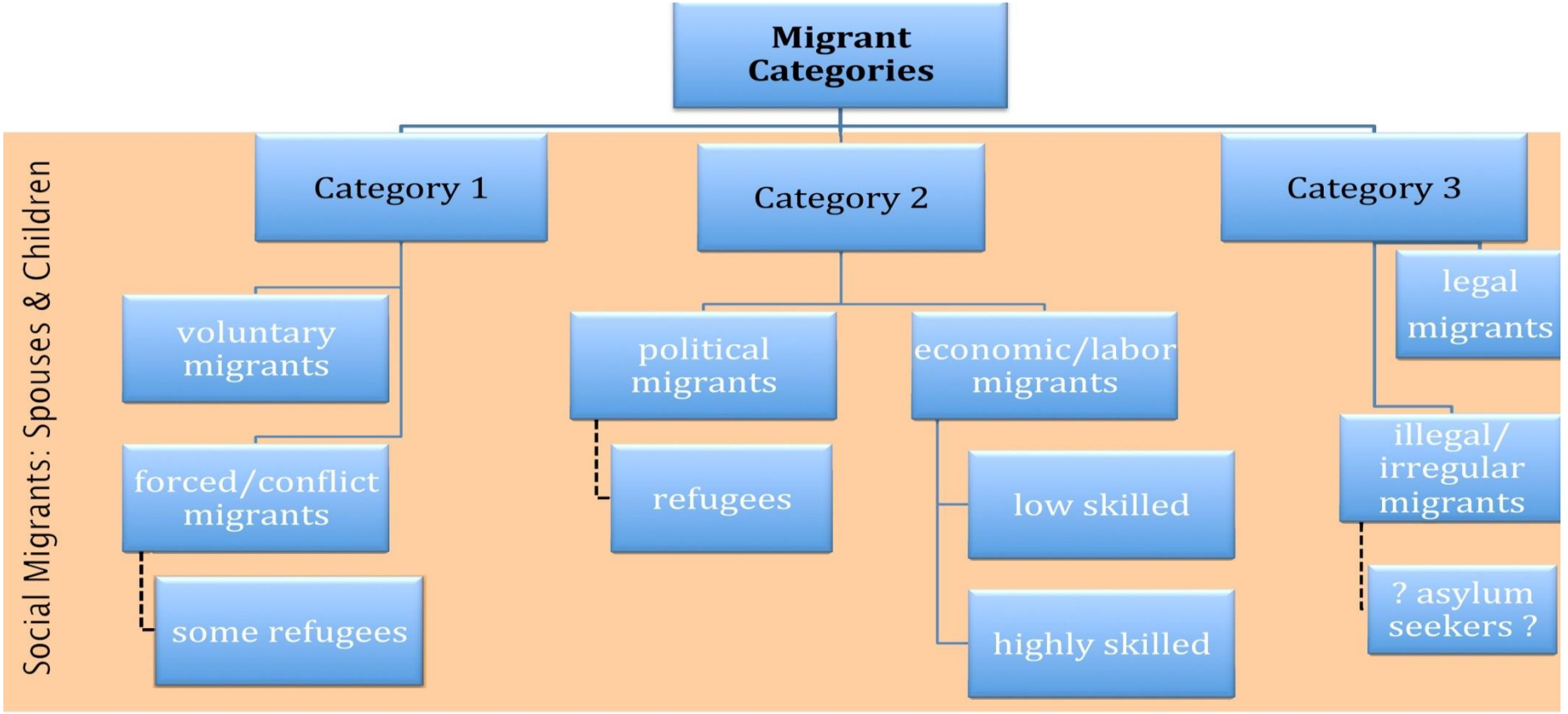

Figure 2: Categories of Migration

3. Theories of Migration

Ravenstein's (1885:167-235) classic and seminal 'migration laws' are rapidly becoming replaced by different ways of doing. More migrants are moving huge distances away from 'home'; migration no longer proceeds in a step-by-step fashion; most migrants are not returning 'home'; more women are migrating; and more families are migrating. Elected migration (persons electing to migrate rather than being forced to migrate) tends to involve more individuals who have the means to do so – migration proves to be selective in this respect.

Faist (1997:187-217) discusses three levels of migration: (1) The *micro*-level which takes note of how the individual's decision-making is affected by motives, stages in the life cycle, access to information, etc. (2) The *meso*-level takes into consideration the social ties which might affect migration (for example, whether and how chain migration occurs). Oderth (2002:45) suggests that physical factors - such as where someone works and education qualifications - should also be included at the meso-level. (3) The *macro*-level involves the effects of opportunities and constraints at the societal level. Faist (1997) offers one possible discourse on why, where, when and how migration occurs. We can possibly consider his theory in a more relational, socially constructed manner by asking *how* migration is decided upon, rather than *why* migration takes place. Oderth (2002:48) insists that when migration is discussed, consideration should be taken of the interconnectedness of *all* the issues prevalent in a migrant's life at the time a decision about whether to migrate or not is made, without valuing the one aspect above the other. He also mentions the fluidity of present migration brought on by the rapid changes in world circumstances such as global travel, media possibilities, and capital.

Malmberg (1997:42, 44-47) writes about "return-migration" and why some migrants decide to return to their countries of origin. He notes various reasons for returning: persons who may have been less integrated in the social life of the destination country; those who may have strong family ties in their country of origin; those who are dissatisfied with life in their destination country; those who have economic incentives to leave and return to their country of origin; those who are politically active in their country of origin; general cultural influences in both countries; fiscal reasons for returning; not having engaged in a relationship with a local person; those who are less apt to learn a new language; those who have less persons from their country of origin in the country of destination with whom they can connect; and, finally, how long the person spent in the country of destination. "Elected migration" is feasible and takes place only if many factors coincide for an individual.

Two significant concepts - the "push" and the "pull" - have developed within migration literature and are regarded as the driving forces behind migration. A "push" is something which is most often, but not always, beyond the control of the migrant; a "pull" is something that acts as an incentive to move a person to another country or area (Oderth 2002:25). It is not always necessary for both pushes and pulls to be prevalent in a person's life for migration to take place. It is useful to note here that, in essence, migration does not only have to occur across country/national borders to be definable as migration. Moving from rural areas to city areas within the same country or from one suburb to another within one city, can also be described as a migratory process. People who migrate within borders or boundaries are referred to as 'outmigrants', 'inmigrants' and 'movers' when no international boundaries are crossed (Oderth 2002:2-3). There are various problems with any classification or categorization – there are always the exceptions to the rule: migratory classifications are certainly not exempt. This work will focus on "international migration" - moving from one country to another across international borders, even though the idea that international migration is normally preceded by within national border migration is commonplace.

4. Definitions of Migration

The United Nations defines a migrant as a person who stays outside their usual country of residence/their country of birth for at least one year. It is important to note, though, that migration affects far more people than just those who actually migrate: it also has social, economic and political impacts in both the originating country and the destination country of the migrant. It is now relatively unusual for people to migrate from one country to another and remain in their destination country for the rest of their lives (Koser 2007:8). Similarly, the more traditional pattern - of migrating once and then returning home - is now becoming a thing of the past. More and more people are migrating several times during their lifetimes, often to different countries and/or parts of the world and then returning "home" (their country of origin) between migrations. As international travelling becomes easier and cheaper, more and more migrants come "home" more often to "sojourn" in their home country. "Sojourning" involves circulation between your country of origin and your destination country, with only a temporary commitment to your destination country. "Suitcase traders" is a new term that has recently become popular: these people move from family member to family member and country to country, wherever the opportunity may present itself to trade their goods – a form of "circular" migration, much like the gypsies (Romanies).

Oderth (2002:2) defines human migration as "… a permanent or semi-permanent change of residence of an individual or group of people." Migration excludes circulation, which refers to short-term, repetitive or cyclical movements without any declared intention of a long-lasting change of residence - such as holiday-makers, students or commuters. Migrants plan to stay in another country for at least one year.

Migration may be defined as the movement of people from one area or country to another Walker (2010:4). The first instance of human migration started around 150 000 years ago when the first people migrated from Africa. Since then migration, in one form or another, has never stopped. People migrate for different reasons. Some migrate out of necessity, like wars or famine. Others migrate out of choice, often for reasons involving jobs, health or comfort.

The term "migrant" thus refers to a wide range of persons in a wide variety of situations. Koser (2007:16) cautions us to consider the difficulties in actually being able to count the number of migrants worldwide or to determine how long they had been abroad. Another difficulty is in determining when a person became a migrant and when that person stopped being a migrant – by either returning home or becoming a citizen of another country.

5. Contextual Aspects of Migration

To say that migration has been a constant and influential part of human history states the obvious. Perhaps less recognized is the way in which migrants frequently have been amongst the most dynamic and entrepreneurial members of society. The willingness to leave so much behind to make it work in a strange country, where the common language is often not understood, seems to nurture a certain resilience and gravitas. Migrants clearly contribute significantly to the economy. *Table 1* (see Chapter One above) indicates the billions in terms of monetary currency (remittances) migrants send home. But perhaps their contribution is most keenly felt in the social and cultural arenas of life, where they contribute to diversity and rich interchange of cultures that add to the cosmopolitan feel one almost always associates with and expects in the larger urban centres around the world.

Migration is not only about opportunities. Challenges face migrants from the outset. There is currently a prevalent attitude that migration poses an inter-/national security risk, especially migrants from certain countries. "Irregular" migrants most certainly fall into this category. Another category are those migrants who leave their homes because they have no choice: they fear death

and persecution. In this inquiry Kon, Jesse, Danielle and Penny – more than one quarter of those persons interviewed – all fall into this category. These migrants are commonly referred to as "asylum seekers" or "refugees". Many migrants perish along the way to a new destination; others are exploited and treated inhumanely in the so-called 'places of safety' (refugee camps) where they are housed *en route* to a preferred destination. There are also certain implications for those countries migrants leave behind: the 'brain drain' is probably the most obvious.

Brettell (2008:113) warns us not to fall into the trap of restricting the multi-faceted nature of migration within well-bounded specifics and deterministic rules and regulations. Anthropologist did not pay the area of migration much attention until the late 1950's. As their writing evolved, they started rejecting the views that cultures were "discretely bounded, territorialized, relatively unchanging, and homogenous units." Migration thus cannot be defined exclusively as one-way and definitive without taking the motivations for migration into consideration. Brettell (2008:116) reminds us that there is another perspective to viewing migration, outside those the policy makers and statisticians hold – a perspective which views the migrant as someone who acts, adapts and often circumvents difficulties; as someone who *experiences* the act of migration. Brettell (2008:113-159) offers another set of terminologies to describe the typologies inherent to the language of migration. For instance, she describes those who return to their countries of origin, but who often re-migrate as "yo-yo migrators." She makes mention of how some cultures have come to regard a period of migration as a rite of passage, much like baptism or marriage. Although she raises the question that I had touched upon when first writing the **after …**, namely, *Where is home?* - she fails to answer this question definitively.

One aspect of migration that must be raised here is the abhorrent practice of "human trafficking" and "migrant smuggling." Human trafficking is a non-voluntary form of migration and equal to the slave trade of previous eras. Although women and young girls, especially, fall prey to this practice, there are indications that in certain countries young boys have now also become a target population and are considered desirable for the sex trade. "People smuggling" is seen largely as a voluntary form of irregular migration. The idea that it is a voluntary decision does not, however, preclude huge injustices being perpetrated upon these migrants by their smugglers.

6. Migration, Transnationalisation and Globalisation

"Transnationalism" inevitably leads to questions about identity and identity acquisition. Theorists argue that identity is influenced by the occurrence of globalisation. Globalisation is seen as "the process(es) which embodies a transformation in the spatial organisation of social relations and transactions generating transcontinental flows and networks of activity, interaction and the exercise of power" (Koser 2007:29). One of the main reasons people migrate is to find work. The communication and transportation revolutions make it easier now for people to move away from their countries of origin than it was in the past. Once people have seen the other side – their destination countries - they are frequently dissatisfied with what they have to go back to in their country of origin. The migration-aware world has thus contributed to a generation which expects to leave for another country in order to obtain a better life.

"Migration networks" contribute to this latter phenomenon. These networks provide the prospective migrant with information, often the finances needed to travel and a place to settle in the new country. Whole family networks are frequently involved: they will make large-scale sacrifices to assist a prospective migrant with the hope of future economic returns on their investments – the hope that the new migrant will "send money home." The official term for money sent back home by the migrant is "remittance." Peggy Levitt (2001:54-72) mentions how, in addition to the monetary remittances flowing to the originating countries of the migrants, remittances now

also include a social flavour (social remittances): the transmitting of ideas, social and cultural practices and codes of conduct. Also important to consider, is the status it lends the remaining family when they have a family member working and living abroad.

In the past, migration frequently resulted from a people's desire to expand and colonise. There are many examples of this kind of expansion and colonisation, such as the Roman Empire; the Mongol Empire; the Vikings; the Pilgrims; the Dutch in Africa; the English across the world and Columbus and the Americas. Much of early expansion and colonisation happened by force. It was common practice in the past that a contingent from the invaders was left to govern the invaded land, thus engaging in a migratory process of sorts. Some of the citizens of the invaded country might also be transported back by the invasion force to its home country. This is still true today: whilst most of the invasion force leaves post the invasion, some members of the invasion force may be assimilated into the invaded country and settle there.

Slavery is a form of migration, although an example of "forced migration" (Walker 2010). Slavery is the one example of the horrors involved with forced migration. Forced migration involves the taking of victims (migrants) by force away from their homes and/or countries to work somewhere else. "Taking by force" includes abduction, buying persons from auctioneers or mass transportation programs. In past eras this taking by force of slaves was enacted by individuals, agencies or military personnel acting within the laws of the time. Forced migration also included the taking of land from others and thus forcing them to find another place to live. The abhorrent practice of sex trafficking (human trafficking) is an example of modern day forced migration. The main difference between this practice and the slavery practice of the 1500's - 1800's, is that human trafficking is now against the laws governing the receiving countries. The Holocaust provides another heart-rending example of forced migration (Walker 2010).

Colonisation is a slower process than expansion. The British Empire, which at its height colonised vast areas, such as India, Hong Kong, Africa, Australia and the Americas, for most people epitomises the word "colonisation". The British Empire's colonisation attempts were largely fuelled by economic reasons and the egos of the reigning monarchs. The need for political, social or religious freedom was another historical driving force behind migration.

Similarly, our personal values are also thought to have considerable impact on human migration. "Our values – based on our beliefs, ideas and practices – shape how we live our lives. These values help us to decide who we are, what we do, and what kinds of people we like" (Walker 2010:20). Escaping persecution, and thus social injustice, is often a great motivator (pull) for migration. Various examples of social injustice prevail: the hate of anything Jewish (anti-Semitism), black-white prejudice, Western-Eastern bias, Western-Asian discrimination, offer a few examples (Walker 2010). Stationary migration happens when borders are redrawn - Pakistan and Sudan being two cases in point, with Israel and Palestine possibly being next on the list.

Fleeing from war involves another dimension of forced migration which contributes to transnationalisation and globalisation. In the modern-day world examples like Bosnia, Rwanda, Congo, Ethiopia, Sudan, India, Pakistan, Mozambique, Angola, Rhodesia/Zimbabwe, Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan confront us. Natural disasters (such as landslides, tsunamis, droughts, avalanches, fires, floods, volcanoes, tornadoes, earthquakes, hurricanes) and environmental/manmade disasters (such deforestation, nuclear fallouts, over-fishing, introduction of invasive plants and animals, health issues, industry, pollution) offer other explanations for the pushes of migration. Droughts in Africa drive many people(s) to migrate to areas where they could possibly survive and eke out a living (for example, in Ethiopia, Somalia, and Kenya). Chernobyl and its nuclear disaster forced residents to

vacate the area in search of a non-contaminated place to live. Fukushima is a most recent example of compounded environmental disasters pushing people to migrate.

Another significant contributing factor to migration is the economy: both the "pull" of seeking better economic opportunities and the "push" of escaping financial disaster. The vagaries of stock markets; industrialisation; the pull of natural resources (such as coal, gold, diamonds, cotton and oil); the transport revolution (railways, etc.); war and the need for soldiers; the open borders in Europe; and more financially viable options in other regions (for example, the migration of people between Mexico and America) all offer examples from more modern times. Irregular (illegal) migration is often the result of migration for economic reasons. There are differing views on the impact of irregular migration. These views range from a recognition of the benefits which migrants bring to a country, to the blaming irregular/illegal migration for placing increasing strain on economic areas such as health care, schooling and housing.

7. Pros and Cons of Migration

Migration has advantages and disadvantages for both receiving and exiting countries. Perhaps the most obvious example is the "brain drain". As the name suggests, the exiting country witnesses many of their most skilled "brains" being siphoned (drained) off. The receiving country greatly benefits from the skills qualified migrants bring to their country. Non-skilled labour also offers the new country bodies to do the labour-intensive, often demeaning, work the citizens often are not eager to do. While the advantages are obvious, it is not without its disadvantages too. Citizens of the receiving country often accuse migrants of stealing jobs from them. This is often accompanied by xenophobic violence. Allowing big groups of migrants to settle also places massive strain on services in the receiving country. Migrant workers often become a pool of cheap labour and find themselves being paid less than native-born workers. Migrants also often pay tax without the benefit of receiving social security. Despite these obvious disadvantages, there are also undoubtedly cultural benefits to an area that accommodates migrants (Walker 2010:43).

8. Migration – A summary

Whilst reading my writing about the terminologies at work in the world of migration, I am left with a sense of confusion. I have spent many months reading about migration, yet I continue to find myself confounded by the intricacies embedded within the topic. I find myself consistently coming back to the same reflection: is this polyglot of jargon not one of the main contributors to the demon of migration? It would seem as if I am not alone in my musings. Koser (2007) makes specific mention of how the complexities of migration have risen to a top spot on the agenda of many countries. I wonder what the nature of the discussions is that hold this top spot? I would not be surprised if most of the debates are about demographical influences, statistics and such like. I would be rather surprised if the debates were about how it might be possible to contribute to a preferred experience for a migrant! It remains relevant, though, that the debates about migration often remain unsatisfactory: concepts remain unclear and are used interchangeably; statistics are used to alarm rather than inform and are manipulated to achieve an unjust end through unjustified means. The picture presented of migration is often very partial. It is often more advantageous for agencies to present a picture of migration which denies, ignores or conceals the real issues of diversity and complexity inherent to the subject. Brettell (2008:137) admits to anthropology adding to the theory about migration, but that "…ethnographic work makes a significant and sometimes unique contribution to our theoretical conversations across disciplines." Ethnographic work contributes to clearing up some of the confusion and the incomplete picture often offered about migration as it addresses more than statistics and offers narratives which are hard to ignore or re-interpret to suit the assertion being debated.

D. IDENTITY

1. Identity – A Positioning

From the outset I would like to position myself. When I write about 'identity', I am not referring to something that can be defined as fixed, measurable and determinate of who one 'is' (as psychology would do, for instance). Like my treatment of the word 'culture', I am making use of a word, but not of its commonly accepted meanings. In my writing I prefer to see 'identity' as referring to a fluidity of being; a non-bounded being; a being who is able to be co-constructed as one goes about one's being in the world. I see 'identity' as a confluence of many conversations and interactions across time, incorporating certain aspects as they become preferable and discarding other aspects as they become less useful. I am thus making use of the word 'identity' on my own terms. As a constructionist, I am constructing new meanings along with my writing.

Similarly, when writing about 'self' or 'the self', I prefer to use self(?) thereby aligning myself with Jerome Brunner (2009:55-57):

> I want to begin by proposing boldly that, in effect, there is no such thing as an intuitively obvious and essential self to know, one that just sits there ready to be portrayed in words. Rather, we constantly construct and reconstruct ourselves to meet the needs of the situations we encounter, and we do so with the guidance of memories of the past and our hopes and fears for the future. Telling oneself about oneself is like making up a story about who and what we are, what's happened, and why we are doing what we're doing….But these self-making precepts are not rigid commands.

For Thornham (2000:3), identities "then are provisional, the product of a specific telling at a specific time; they imply an arbitrary ending and an arbitrary structure to a story….In the same way, cultural studies have been important in constructing identity as a field…" Belonging to a certain grouping and the sense of belonging this allows us, shows in the many 'ethnic' urban neighbourhoods in various cities across the world Cohen (2010:6) elaborates on how culture impacts identity:

> …identity is reflected in how a person views him-/herself and how a person views and relates to another. By identifying with a particular culture, and belonging to a group whose cultural ties are strong, a person may gain a sense of security and belonging. Feeling that people around us understand, value, and accept us gives us a sense of self-worth.

2. Cultural Identity

Cultural identity - what we call ourselves in terms of our cultural label - is based on many factors. For example, Am I an African woman or a white, South African woman with British influences? It remains possible that we may call ourselves different things at different times. When I needed a parking permit at UNH, I was happy to be regarded as Adjunct Faculty ('staff'), as my UNH identity card stated. But when I was attending seminars, or wanted to access the Student Health Care System, I preferred to be seen and referred to as a student. More often than not, it would seem that a cultural group would maintain its own cultural identity, but does reshape itself to fit into the culture it has moved into. In the same way as the very earliest migrants adapted from their African origins to aid their acclimatisation into the areas where they settled and multiplied (for example, the Nordic countries), we still continue to adapt to our more modern-day environments, both in biological and non-biological ways. Unfortunately, maintaining our own cultural ways (non-biological ways) and our physical attributes (biological ways) frequently leads to acts of discrimination against any migrant individual or grouping.

The latter aspects of migrant identity maintenance contribute to what is termed as "culture shock", or "…the negative feelings people have when they are uprooted and transplanted into a new

culture" (Cohen 2010:12). Culture shock is typified by a not-knowing of what others expect of you and by contributing feelings of anxiety and confusion. A frequent response to culture shock is a mild to intense dislike of the new culture. Such dislikes may prompt individuals to isolate themselves from their new culture. And yet, a return to one's old/previous culture, is often accompanied by "re-entry shock" in which the returning migrants find it hard to adapt to the 'old' ways still prevalent in their country of origin (Cohen 2010:13).

Easthope (2011:61-70) describes mobility as a social issue and argues that both mobility and place are essential components of identity construction. There is a complex inter-relationship between mobility, place and identity. She shares Brettell's (2008) opinion of migration as having been viewed as a function of discreet parts rather than as a whole with influences upon the experiences of persons, whilst people do not always act as rational, calculating subjects to be researched and described as to fit into one specific category. She draws upon Anthony Giddens (1991:4, 27, 32), amongst others, who suggests that we are moving away from (rooted) identities based on place towards more flexible or global identities. Easthope (2011:66) concludes that mobility and place are influential in its constitutive contribution to identity. She states that her research underscores the idea that identity is influenced by place, but not to the exclusion of all other contributing aspects. Langellier (1999:129) seems to concur: "Identity and experience are a symbiosis of performed story and the social relations in which they are materially embedded….This is why personal narrative performance is especially crucial to those communities left out of the privileges of dominant culture, those bodies without voice in the political sense."

A recurring theme emerging from in my reading about migration and identity is the notion of a "transnational identity" (Tsuda 2011:295-333). Transnationalism allows for the being here and the being there, the returning and the in-between to which the title of my writing refers. For me, a transnational identity links with Kreb's (1991:1) notion of edgewalking – the notion of belonging either here or there or in-between. The idea of walking on the edge and belonging in more than one place at the same time sits comfortably with me. Gerharz (2011: 583-601) describes how social relations change when proximity is re-established after a long period of separation. She mentions how the practices of the new possibilities for mobility available in the current era are constituted by a momentum for the re-negotiation of identity. There is a growing awareness of differences in our cultural expressions and perspectives. This construction of difference is related to spatial mobility as well as temporality. Gerharz suggests that spatial and temporal distance in translocal relations determines the construction of images - detached from face-to-face interaction and locality, which in turn is constitutive of an identity space, where new and fluid possibilities emerge with respect to identity. Her work leads her to state that the re-establishing of co-presence and proximity is crucial for returning migrants, as well as those who stayed home. Ironically, this same re-establishment of co-presence and proximity also provoked feelings of alienation and resistance on both sides. Economic differences also played a role both for the returnees and those who remained behind. Similarly, the differences in perceived 'cultural differences' played a role in how the returning migrants were received. If the returning migrants brought along too many influences from the outside, they were seen as spoiling local culture.

3. Identity and Place

I come across a work by Stephanie Taylor, *Narratives of identity and place* (2010). Walking past a bookshelf in the Dimond Library at UNH - my home away from where I sleep and wash - I spotted it lying there haphazardly, left by someone who possibly just glanced at it. It calls to me and I pick it up, paging with a sense of excitement and dread. Excitement about having found something that so relevantly speaks to what I am inquiring into and dread about whether I have exhausted my search for sources on my topic of inquiry. I decide to leave dread be for the moment as I become absorbed

by Taylor's (2010) work. She addresses the commonplace changes of residence in the current era. She remarks on how traditional connections to birthplaces, hometowns and countries are broken as persons relocate and migrate. She nevertheless insists that where one lives remains significant to one's identity and stories about who one is. She asks questions about how everyday meanings shape and limit one's sense of identity and how these everyday meanings contribute to establishing connection to place, and thus identity. She argues that talk about place, especially place of residence, enables a complex positioning of self and others in which identities of gender, class and national identity intersect. One's multiple interpretations of where one lives remains central to one's life narrative, as well as to one's - often idealised - sense of 'home' as the place where one may position oneself in a preferred way.

The latter notion reminds me of my conversation with Tielman, my husband, earlier this afternoon. He has now been in living and working in South Africa for the past 2½ years. After the break-in (burglary) of his home during the previous weekend, Tielman is again disillusioned with the country he *so* wanted to return to from Britain at the end of 2009, just as he was before we left South Africa for the first time in 2003. 'His' country has let him down again. His sense of positivity about and preference for South Africa has now waned. He wants to go back to England, or even move to Brazil, as this is fast becoming a real option. His sense of 'home' is now an ephemeral, ungraspable ghost somewhere out there. He speaks about a sense of not-belonging, of in-betweeness. He asks me the question: "Who am I? A drifter?" Today he finds it difficult to locate himself in place and starts to wonder who he 'is'?

4. The importance of Identity, Belonging and Temporality

One might rightfully ask why identity is important. Theorist offer that the nature of identity has changed in this late modern/postmodern/globalised society. Giddens (1991) tells us that we now live in the world in a different way than we have ever lived in the world before. Our world has so much on offer; so much is made possible through electronic communications, the media and transport. If this latter notion holds true, it becomes of increasing importance to understand how we situate and think about ourselves in this virtually limitless world. Taylor (2011:3) describes identity as being "…about the interface between what might variously be characterized as the macro and the micro, the exterior and the interior, the peopled social world and the individual person within it, as well as other people's view of 'who I am' and how I see myself." This suggests that identity is not only located within the person and thus measurable and predictable. Taylor recognises that our being in the world has an impact on how we perceive ourselves as situated in the world. She thus makes a strong case for the interface of identity being that which is co-constructed by the personal and the social: "identities are socially produced" and "there is no aspect of identity that lies outside social relations."

If the latter is true and identities are indeed socially produced, how do we now go about reconciling a claim of belonging and a sense of home with the other identities and life-circumstances we hold, especially as those are often in conflict with the more traditional ways of being that are still being practiced by many? I recall how I tried to voice this dichotomous position to my 92-year old mother-in-law. She cannot understand why we would want to live in other countries "far away from our family and our roots." Her continual question, "*maar wie is julle nou eintlik*?" (So who *are* you now, actually?) forces me to try to explain to her - and to myself within constructionally acceptable language - how this thing of identity works. My standard answer became: "*Ma, wie jy is het nie te doen met die mure om jou of waar daardie mure fisies gebou is nie"* ("Mother, who one is has nothing to do with the walls around you or where those walls are physically built.") Needless to say, this explanation remains unsatisfactory – both to her and to myself. So, what then, would an acceptable explanation comprise? Giddens (1991) proposes that one's identity might be a life-long

project. If this is true, I believe that such a project would become an ongoing and unending negotiation of possibilities involving our choices and activities, how we present ourselves, how we talk and think and write about ourselves – a life-long project indeed.

The example of a mother pops up once again, but this time it is my mother. She suffered a Hemorrhagic Stroke which left her with no memory after the age of seven years. After suffering the stroke she had no notion of my father - with whom she had shared the past 70 years (including courting and marriage) - at all, at any time. If you asked me to describe her before this stroke, I would tell you of someone with a quiet, strong, persistent knowledge of who she was and what she wanted. She had a wicked sense of humour, and her piercing blue eyes spoke of a knowing and an 'intelligence' of note. But if you asked me to describe her as I saw her last, I would have to use words like: a pathetic, vacant body lying in a white hospital bed in a foetal position, yet watching my every move with somewhat dimmed blue eyes, obviously searching for the memory of who this person was that was holding her, smoothing her hair, crooning in her ear words of love and caring and sadness at what had been lost. When I eventually extracted myself from her room in the Frail Care Facility, tears spilled from her eyes. Would Giddens' (1991) description of identity, along with my own seeking of a satisfactory explanation of that which we might describe as 'identity', explain who my mother had become after the stroke? According to the latter descriptions, her presentation after the stroke formed a part of her negotiation of possibilities. Or did it? Would Giddens' (1991) notion of agency hold any relevance in my mother's case? It would be tempting, quite possibly, to side-step my mother as an example in this section on identity, so as not confuse the issue and to come to an easy and mutually acceptable definition. I find it difficult to write about my mother particularly because there are so many levels of experience and knowing alive in me simultaneously. I question whether my construction of her 'identity' - both before and after her suffering the stroke - is not more a part of my *dasein* than how it is that she would have described herself? Would this hold true for what we have come to term as 'identity' for all of us? I have a notion that Taylor (2010) would agree with my view.

Davies and Harré (1991:43-63) contribute usefully to the above discussion by suggesting that a speaker can occupy a temporary coherent identity with its own vantage point(s), perspective(s) or position(s). In the course of talk, speakers take up certain positions: they position themselves and in turn are positioned by other speakers. If we can thus occupy an 'identity' that may suit us at any given time, this seems to suggest that identity is not fixed, but rather co-constructed by means of the particularities of the social world prevalent at a specific time. But this latter 'identity' does not refer to our respective 'biographical' identities. I am a white South African-born woman, who has resided in England/Wales for the past decade. I am also trained as a psychologist and am, at present, residing in Durham, New Hampshire, USA until I complete the writing of this inquiry narrative. That is a short composition of my biographical identity. If I were requested to describe my 'identity' to you, I would have to stand with John Shotter in his notion that he is unable to know what his ultimate position on any given topic is going to be as he has not concluded his conversation with you, thus indicating that meaning evolves within the conversation. In the same way, my description of my identity would be reliant upon our conversation.

5. Identity and Meaning-Making

Barnett Pearce (2007:78-104) suggests that in coordinating actions we make meaning together. Thus, by identifying and acting wisely upon critical moments, we make meaning of them. I believe that these coordinating actions allow us to make meanings - whether we act wisely or not so wisely during critical or not so critical moments – according to our eventual interpretations of those acts. These meanings that we make in turn contribute to how it is that we view our ability to act or not act, thus contributing to how it is that we 'see' ourselves or story our identities. To illustrate, it

might be useful here to reflect, with hindsight obviously, on how I received and perceived my coordinations with my newly appointed Head of Department. As Acting Head of Psychology, I had effectively filled the Head of Department position for the previous nine months, but I was not considered for a permanent appointment because I was not 'adequately qualified' according to the discriminatory prejudices held by those who had qualified in the UK. I know now that this matter contributed to how I was going on together with XX, especially as he formed part of the panel who had decided upon my non-appointment! At critical moments, I had coordinated with him in a manner that I would now describe as 'unwise'. In our future coordinations, these critical moments contributed to how I was making meaning of my own abilities and thus constructing a self(?) narrative of failure. I sought coherence for my failure narrative in various ways, making and managing meaning to fit with the coordinations which I had selected to give immediacy. If I had coordinated with XX during critical moments in a different, wiser or more mindful manner, my narrative could have had a different outcome. If XX and I were to have followed the suggestions of Hames-García (2011), we would have explored ways of inviting an understanding of our divergent social identities as mutually constitutive of each other into our going on together, rather than focusing on what it was that constituted the differences between us.

By going about this writing, coordinating with the writing and acting with the writing in a (hopefully) wiser and more mindful way, I could renegotiate the meaning I have made of my initial failure narrative. I could re-engage with my prior, preferred, narrative of activist and world conqueror. I could reshape my 'identity' – my preferred picture of myself, keeping in mind that this picture is not a static, completely defined object, but a fluid finger-painting of future possibilities open to new meanings and new conversations, which stroke by stroke shapes our being in the world and our going on together.

6. Identity – A Summary

Gergen (1971) writes eloquently about how the concept of 'self' originated and has been perpetuated in society. He makes a case for situating the self(?) as a blending of multiple conceptions, rather than an assumption of a single concept of self(?): "…the assumption of a single, or global, concept of self seems misleading. Rather than speaking of *the* self or self-concept, it is much more fruitful to speak of multiple conceptions" [author's italics] (Gergen 1971:20). In closing this section on identity, I wish to draw on Hames-García (2011:6), whilst taking into account all the aforesaid about the individualistic characteristics attributable to the notions of the selves and identity:

> …social identities do not simply intersect now and then. They blend, constantly and differently, like the colours of a photograph. From within this multiplicity, over the course of a history of experiences coloured by social interaction, emerge personal identities, or concrete fleshy selves.

E. CONCLUSION

"Human beings always seem to act under conditions they do not fully know and with consequences they neither fully intend nor can fully understand" (Rosaldo 1993: xviii). Rosaldo's statement reminds us that we hold no ultimate truths about why people do things in the way they do them. Generalisations are frequently dangerous. It would be of greater value to make meaning together: to have conversations where the obvious is held very lightly and an inquiry into the meaning of the obvious is collaboratively negotiated and shaped into a preferable interpretation for all concerned. Culture and power have become entwined and the Foucauldian notion of power/knowledge pulls us towards an individualism where we seek to protect ourselves from the perpetrators of power.

It is important that we do not become so absorbed by theoretical discussions and, in the process, lose the meaning-making that our dialogic enterprises deserve. We need to heed Anderson and Schlunke's (2008: xxi-xxii) advice that the difference between practice and theory is not only a constructed one, but that practice is intrinsically theoretical. To practice something is to do something and, to be doing that something, one has to have some theory that supports the doing, whether that theory is overtly considered or not. We bring our embodied knowledges to all that we do or practice by rote. By performing these rote practices, we engage in meaning-making. "…. [T]he fact that meaning is made or can be produced by practices suggest that all practices are not only interpretable, but in being interpretable are mediated …. [A]ll practices are theorised in various ways." At a rudimentary level, through both personal and academic theories, we attach meaning to our cultural and identity practices and, in this way, our practices come to represent us in a particular way. As someone who happily stands under the umbrella of Social Constructionism, I also acknowledge that I have been influenced enormously by Foucault's propositions. I would thus plead for a stance of *both/and* rather than the binary oppositional stance of choosing *either* this explanation *or* that definition for the elucidatory theories surrounding migration, culture and identity. From this position we could allow meaning to be co-created as conversations come into being in the future.

The permeable and almost diaphanous nature of my attempt to conceptualise culture, migration and identity has left me with a deepened awareness that these concepts represent a Pandora's Box of possibilities. Once the lid is opened, there is no way in which the lid can be closed again. Strive as I might, their meaning continues to be slippery. I have to acknowledge that no ultimate or conclusive definition will be possible for either culture or identity. My experience of defining migration seemed slightly easier. At least it has pin-downable specifics – such as crossing borders - to help us find purchase. The experience remains, however, that the deeper I dig into the box, the more aware I become that it is only in the going on together that we can make sense of new possibilities and shared meanings. The latter is not a relativist stance – a cop-out because I fail to find the ultimate definition for these concepts. Rather, it is the recognition that in our going-on together – our conversations – we move closer and closer to what it is that we may be trying to formulate. At best, the prior will act as a prompt to open up conversations about how future meanings might become different or how present meanings might actually be preferred.

CHAPTER FIVE

The How -Methodological Considerations Considerations

"My actions are my only true belongings.
I cannot escape the consequences of my actions.
My actions are the ground on which I stand."
— Thich Nhat Hanh
(*Understanding Our Mind:*
***50 verses on Buddhist Psychology*)**

A. INTRODUCTION

The writing of an inquiry report should be a well thought through and organised process. It quickly becomes evident to the reader if an author has tackled the research journey in a haphazard manner: the reader cannot make logical sense of the process. These ideas have been drummed into me since I first encountered research and research methodology. My initial instinct has been to continue on the well-trodden path. I have borrowed the graph below (*Fig 1*) from Crotty (2010:9). Hopefully this will help me to make sense of how I want to organise and structure the writing of this inquiry narrative. The choice and variety of possible research methodologies offer a labyrinth of possibilities which can be very confusing even to the discerning researcher. I am no exception. Most authors advise that one identifies how one wants to situate one's research prior to starting on the research – a journey which will inevitably produce blind spots irrespective of how well one's plans were laid out at the start of the process.

I take this advice seriously as I search for a way to order and position my research. But the first obstacle which confronts me is how to navigate my way past the notion of 'research'. I am not researching any one thing or any one person. I am inquiring into a phenomenon called "migration" - a process which I have lived through personally and in which I continue to live. Having contravened 'received scientific' sensibilities from the outset, I have decided that for the rest of this writing, I will be using 'inquiry' to describe what I am engaging with rather than the standard the term, 'research'.

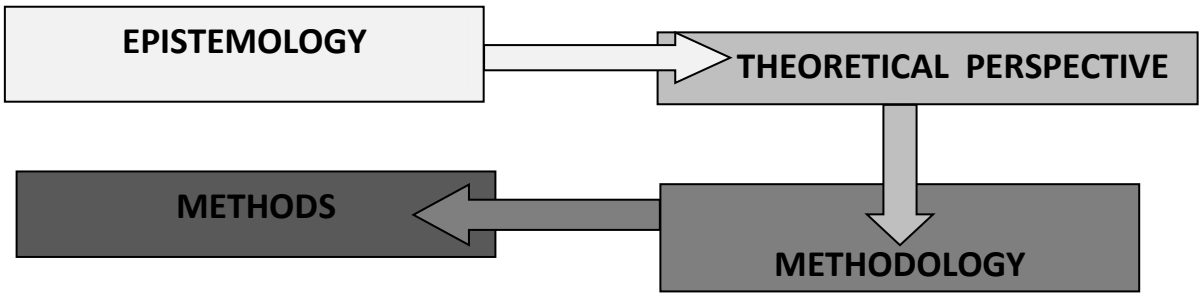

Figure 3 –Original Scaffolding of Research Methodology Components (Crotty 2010:9)

I have taken the liberty of tinkering with Crotty's (2010:9) representation. He suggests that one should address one's chosen Epistemological/Ontological stance first, followed by one's chosen Theoretical Perspective. Various authors (for instance, Anderson & Schlunke 2008: ix, 49) prefer to think of Social Construction as an outflow from Postmodernism and Feminism. I have adjusted the

flow of the inquiry (see Chapter Two: Postmodernism and Feminism, and Chapter Three: Social Construction) from Crotty's original version to enable me to give a true reflection of how I wish to structure this inquiry.

Crotty (2010:1-17) describes each of the above mentioned components as being scaffolded - the one upon the other - and thus informing one another. He acknowledges that the plethora of research methodologies and methods available to the researcher often contribute to the researcher's initial confusion. The following diagram offers an abbreviated view of the descriptions he lends to each of the four components of research:

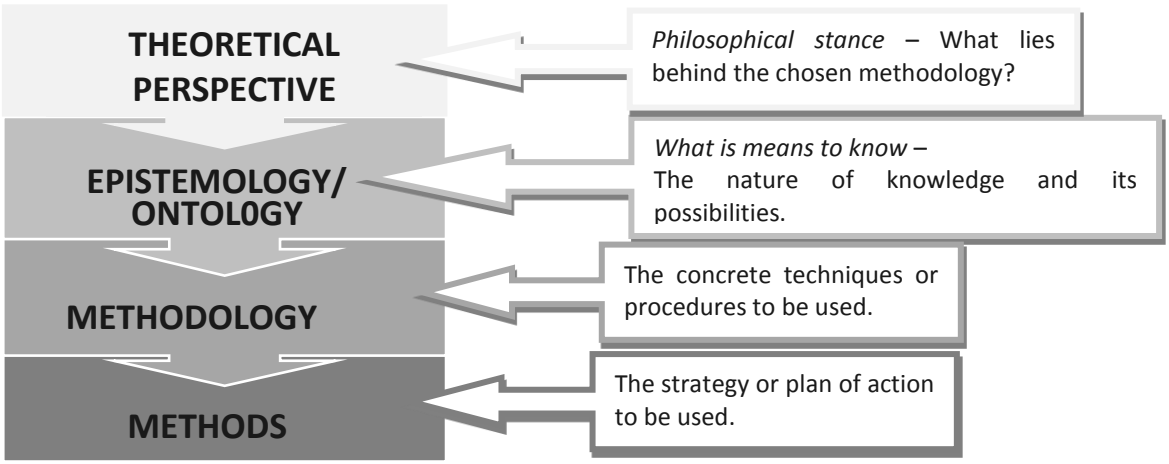

Figure 4 – Descriptions of Scaffolded Components

Adapting Crotty's diagram, along with the descriptions of each of the components, has allowed me to make logical sense of *The How* of my journey of inquiry. As *The How* has loomed large over my writing from the outset, I experience a sense of relief now that *The How* has been outlined. The body of the writing is taking form. *Figure 3 – Extended Scaffolding of Inquiry Choices* (an expanded version of Crotty's (2010:9) original diagram)is an abbreviated version of the summary of *The How*. This schematic representation of *The How* will help to keep me aware of the plan I will follow during the journey of writing up this inquiry narrative:

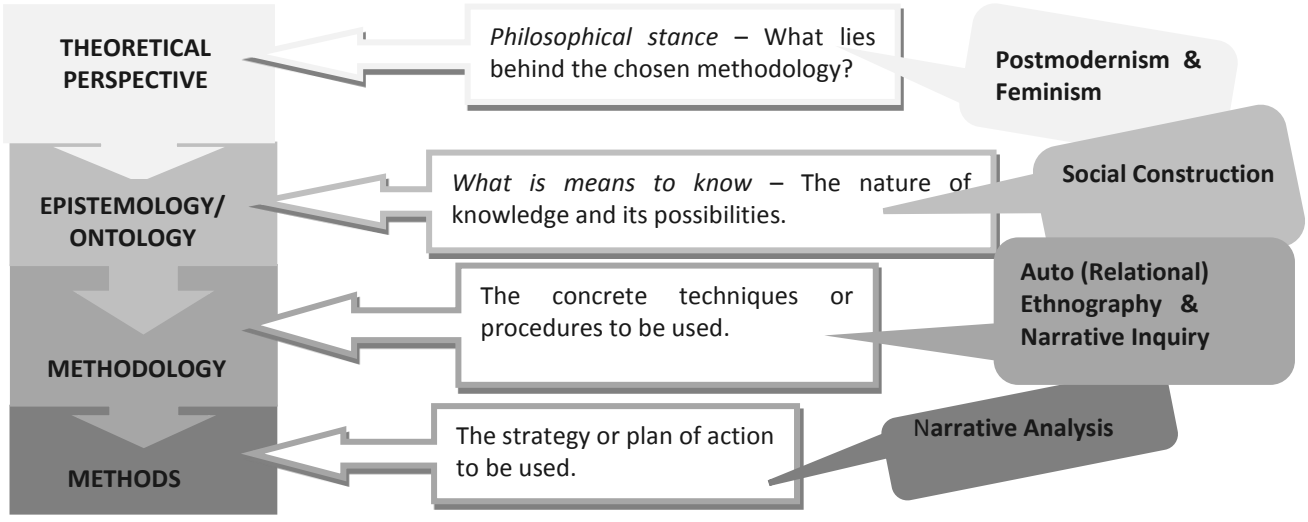

Figure 5 – Extended Scaffolding of Inquiry Choices

Reflection: I look out of the window. I notice a semi-dilapidated structure in the neighbour's backyard. It rather leans to the one side. The metaphor is appealing. To move onto building the walls of a structure, one has to lay a firm foundation. Without a firm foundation, the structure will soon show signs of distress. The foundations of Stories are to be found in Relational Construction. The ideas central to Relational Construction form a firm part of my preferred way of being-in-the-world and lead me quite naturally to a discussion of Relational Construction.

Reflection on my Reflection: My thoughts wander as I type the previous sentence. I recall how I sat in the willow tree in our front garden, absorbed in yet another tome about someone's life. I am about eight or nine years old. That evening I formally announce to my father: "*Eendag gaan ek 'n sielkundige wees.*" ("One day I am going to be a psychologist.") My father stares at me blankly. It was his opinion that I should qualify myself as a barrister – a dream he was never able to realise for himself. I toil and I toil. Eventually I am accepted onto the programme that enables me to qualify as a registered psychologist. Three months into the course I inform my husband that I want to quit. "*Ek kan dit nie doen nie. Dis nie hoe ek wil wees nie*." ("I can't do this. It's not how I want to be.") He advises: "*Moenie opgee nie. Hou aan. Wanneer jy klaar is kan jy vir jou manier van doen gaan soek*." ("Don't quit. Carry on. When you are done, you can find your own way of doing.") Wise words. During 1998 I come into contact with Narrative Therapy and Social Construction. I had found my epistemological home ...

B. QUALITATIVE INQUIRY IN GENERAL

It is generally accepted that the inquiry methods situated within the Postmodern, Feminist and Social Constructionist discourse fall within the scope of qualitative research. A brief overview of what, where and how qualitative research positions itself should aid the understanding of why I chose Auto (Relational) Ethnography and Narrative Inquiry as the methodologies in this inquiry and why I chose to use multiple methodologies in the first instance.

Ellis (2004:25) describes qualitative research as "… referring to a variety of research methods and procedures associated with the goal of trying to understand the complexities of the social world in which we live and how we go about thinking, acting, and making meaning in our lives." For Denzin and Lincoln (2003:1-45), "qualitative research is a field of inquiry in its own right. It crosscuts disciplines, fields, and subject matters. A complex, interconnected family of terms, concepts and assumptions surround the term *qualitative research*." A narrative turn was taken during the 21st century within research circles: many researchers have learned to write differently and learned to differently locate themselves and their participants within their writing. Alternative criteria of evaluation have been sought – criteria that would prove more evocative, moral, and ethical and rooted in local understandings:

> … Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices inform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretative, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.
>
> (Denzin & Lincoln 2003:4)

Qualitative researchers typically use multiple methods during their inquiries so as to move towards a deeper understanding of the matter into which they are inquiring (Denzin & Lincoln 2003:8). It is important to remember that no one method is privileged over the other – qualitative research allows the situation to call for the methodology. It is also necessary to remain mindful that each researcher/inquirer comes from his/her own biography: previous experiences, race, age and approaches towards the world will all influence the inquirer. Feminist writing make us aware of the

political power dynamics made visible by inquiring into such themes as silences, absences and distortions within dominant discourses (Hawkesworth 2006:6). Feminist inquiry is saturated by examples of the personal and the political intersecting – of asking question into the liminal space. As feminist inquirers it remains important that we remain especially mindful of how we make sense of 'evidence blindness' – the contradictory evidence concerning the same phenomenon. How will I make sense of the 'evidence' which stands contra to my experience of migration?

As an inquirer, while one might be set on presenting what is experienced in as accurate a manner as possible, one must never forget, as an inquirer situated within the Social Construction discourse, there is no one Truth or ultimate description of what is perceived (Hawkesworth 2006:54-56). Central to the qualitative research is the commitment to remain aware of the ethical implications (see below) of being in conversation with others during the inquiry process (Schwandt 2003:307-319).

How do we want to represent ourselves and our inquiry (Fine *et al* 2003:167-207)? Do we want to contribute to the othering of the persons we represent during our inquiry (Olesen 2003:340)? Qualitative research and feminism normally enquire into the liminal space - or the in-between space – left between the binary oppositions often employed by those 'in the know'. The people stuck in the liminal space frequently operate on some or other margin of the society they inhabit. Thus by representing them in our inquiries as marginalised - as 'other' - do we in fact perpetuate their marginalisation? This ethical, value-laden question needs to be uppermost in our thinking when we engage with qualitative research.

We need to be generative in our viewing of our conversations with others rather than taking a stance of 'othering' of those who we are in conversation with (Gergen & Gergen 2003:575-610). If we can view moments of interaction as opportunities to engage with others with enthusiasm and excitement about emergent and unexpected new ways of going on together then possibilities for a multivocality of options become more likely. Closely connected to the idea of multivocality is the idea about how validity can be accounted for in our work. For Gergen and Gergen (2003:577), the notion of validity in any given inquiry is itself impossible because it is impossible to privilege any particular account by someone of his/her life. The telling about their experience is their account about the living of their lives within in a specific culture and under circumstances specific to them. To replicate and validate their account of their experience would thus be impossible.

A conscious, reflexive stance is called for when engaging with the responsibilities of qualitative research - responsibilities other than cohering to validity and standardisation. Reflexive responsibility towards the human beings who are co-journeying with me during the course of the inquiry (Christians 2003:223) maintains the reliability of this inquiry. Qualitative researchers' quest is to be known as 'inquirers' who are enabling persons to dialogically negotiate their environment within their societies; or as 'enablers of transformation'. This quest implies a huge responsibility on our behalf to remain reflexive, ethical and aware of our own values that we bring along to the inquiry. How we interpret the 'stuff' of our inquiries needs to be underpinned by a morality of 'do no harm'.

My friend, Kate, gave me a card when she left Durham.

I AM
BECAUSE
YOU ARE

African Proverb

This inquiry into migration is located within the qualitative, postmodern realm. It seeks to articulate, in its smallest form, the many and multiple stories told by migrants all over the world without, at any point, attempting to prescribe and hold forth the taken-for-granted or make ultimate knowledge claims. It has as a meta-aim the opening of a discursive space where other options may be considered and more stories told – a space where *what is* may be traded for *what is possible*. Finally, it needs to be said that this particular way of going about inquiry is not the only way. This, specific, inquiry is merely making use of one of multiple ways available to us of how we may look at a world of growing complexities:

> … I have come to believe over and over again that what is most important to me must be spoken, made verbal and shared, even at the risk of having it bruised or misunderstood. That the speaking profits me, beyond any other effect.
>
> (Audre Lorde 1995:151)

C. SPECIFICS OF THIS INQUIRY

1. Background to the Inquiry

The ***Background*** to Stories is enfolded within the arms of the migrant persons whom I encountered in some way: during my visit to South Africa during December 2010 and January 2011 and during the seven years of our stay in England and the short time we lived in Taiwan. The Background is also wrapped snugly in my own arms. What was my particular "moment of insertion" into this inquiry? That moment which:

> …happens for us at each occasion or event when suffering or oppressions in persons' or communities' lives directly confronts us or includes us as a witness or participant in some way. These moments of insertion can often have deep communal or social significance (that is, political significance).
>
> (Cochrane, de Gruchy & Petersen 1991:17)

Caroline Hanisch (1969:1-5) first coined the term "the personal is the political" to describe the notion that one cannot disentangle one's own experiences (the personal) from that which one stands for (the political). My embodied experience – the personal - will be what I take up a position about – the political. It was during a group therapy session for women that Hanisch recognised that the group's collective personal struggles were a reflection of what they were struggling with politically – hence, the personal is the political.

Reflection: Reading these words, I am assured that there is no turning back for me from this inquiry. Maybe, just maybe, The Writing will inspire some change, for some people or instances, however minuscule ...

My particular moment of insertion happened during January 2011 upon my return to England after my holiday in South Africa. I was aware when I reflected on my decision to become immediately and intimately involved in this project that a sense of 'Poor Old Me' might be prevalent. But every time the 'Poor Old Me' thought makes itself known, the image of the Zimbabwean man at the traffic intersection hovers alongside like a ghost. I am reminded that synchronicity (Campbell 1971) plays its part in the living of our lives. I also realise that although life was not always perfect for me during my time of migration, it was far from the kind of life the man at the traffic light was living. No one lives a 'perfect life' anywhere, anyhow. Moreover, it is acceptable to invite my total person into the inquiry(Gallagher 1996:119). My work life and my personal life thus became the two irrefutable aspects which contributed to my immediate insertion into the project.

Reflection: Poor Old Me. Sad Sack. Self-absorbed. These phrases do not sit well with me. Yet, they are present in the telling. How much do I make known? How do I remain authentic? How much of it, if at all, do I need to reveal to keep the evocative narrative going?

My experience of my work life was less than 'perfect' for various reasons. My training as a Narrative Practitioner was, and will be forever, in conflict with the Medical Model. I was continuously reminded that I needed to respect and practise the necessary 'boundaries' as described by the British Psychological Society's dictums regarding ethical practice between myself and the clients in my care. I was continuously reminded that I - as a Counselling Psychologist who had qualified in South Africa -"just" (Gergen 2009a) did not measure up to the gold standard of being qualified as a Clinical Psychologist in England. I could list numerous conversations with numerous United Kingdom (UK) registered Clinical Psychologists about how Counselling Psychologists "just did not make the grade." But to continue in this way will only contribute to my sense of 'Poor Old Me'. I am, by virtue of my Narrative Therapy training, an active participant within the therapeutic process. The assumption is that one chooses to practice within a therapeutic modality that reflects one's being-in-the world. Moreover, one's being in research connects who one is in private with who one is in the world (Dudley-Marling 1996:34). Dare I stretch this conjecture to include who one is in the workplace?

I could describe my being-in-the-world as including moments of acting within the role of activist and community worker (Brink, 2004). But 'Activist and Community Worker' did not fit well within the Job Description of Consultant Psychologist at the various hospitals I worked at in the United Kingdom. What can be described as power and patriarchy (see Chapter Two above) were themselves visible in innumerable ways within The Hospital. Power-politics does not allow occasion for equality and fairness (Freedman & Combs 1996a:37-40) and the development of a more textured way of working.

Reflection: Anger sits right beside me in the telling. I could name and shame *each* one of these persons who so degraded me, my knowledge, my experience, my way of being-in-the-world. The desire not to fall foul of Poor Old Me and self-absorption stands against becoming Anger's victim ...

As a practitioner who had found a home within the tenets of Social Construction thinking (see Chapter Three above), my preference was away from the Medical Model and its modernist way of quantifying and labelling persons by means of psychometric testing, the DSM-IV (APA 2002) and the ICD 10 (WHO 2010). I found it difficult to present clients with pre-packaged workshops on various topics which would 'heal' them. This way of working did not always suffice within the portals of a Residential Adult Forensic Mental Health Hospital. During these times my experience, knowledge and extensive list of therapeutic 'successes' did not make the grade.

Reflection: As I speak with persons who speak the language of Social Construction, as I attend workshops on Social Construction, as I read the texts on Social Construction and the knowing that I also have a voice – a useful voice – within this world props me up again. A giggle arises in me. It bubbles over. I laugh at Poor Old Me. Poor Old Me becomes 'POM'. English persons are often (erroneously) referred to as Poms or Pommies. The irony keeps me company for a while ...

My personal life was lonely, dark and dank for the final eighteen months of my residence in the UK. I was living like an outcast: in a basement flat, on my own, without my family. No ray of sunshine lit upon this Mole Hole during any given day, winter or summer. This metaphor fits well to describe this particular period of my life. I was a prisoner of The Hospital during my working day and a prisoner of The Mole Hole during my non-working hours. The experience of coming back from six weeks in Africa - where I had experienced unlimited sunshine and the unlimited love and adoration of friends and family; enjoyed fruit and vegetables that actually tasted of sunshine; and had been absorbed into a community that I (mostly) understood – all contributed to the moment of insertion becoming a natural transition.

The United Kingdom has been in the throes of an economic depression for approximately the past four years. During 2009 Tielman (my husband) found himself amongst the 'collateral damage' of the economic depression: along with thousands of the others, he was retrenched from his job and unable to gain employment. At the end of 2009 we made a decision that he would return to South Africa to take up a position with a company in Johannesburg. We became one of the global village families: we saw each other only occasionally, but spoke incessantly on the phone - Skypeing, e-mailing and texting to maintain the tenuous links of being married across continents. The experience of having been with him and Bianca (my daughter, who lives and works in Cape Town) for six glorious weeks, made The Mole Hole-option an even more unattractive option. This was another contributing factor to the moment of insertion.

Reflection: I am reminded of the unusual-for-the-UK snowfall during late November 2010. The boiler in The Mole Hole breaks. No hot water. No central heating. The window in the bathroom cannot close. I measure 8^0C below in my bathroom. The landlord is unaffected: 'Sorry, the plumber can't get to you'. I cannot leave The Mole Hole. I am snowed-in like so many other Brits ...

Reflection: I find myself writing about these issues in a rather detached, unaffected way. Yet, I speak of The Holiday as if it had gained saintly status ...

2. Moment of Insertion

If the above describes the ***background*** to my connection with the inquiry, what would I describe as my ***particular moment of insertion***? It is the third day after my sacred holiday: still on an adrenalin-high, I am now back at work and ready to give my undivided all to The Hospital. A new Head of Department has been appointed to the Psychology Department: I was regarded as unqualified to continue with the role of acting Head which I had filled for the past nine months due to the fact that in South Africa I had "only qualified as a Counselling Psychologist." It is my first meeting of the new year with him. He asks me about myself and my experience at The Hospital. I explain to him how it had been for me. His demeanour convinces me that he is really interested in my thoughts. In my telling I include how it has been particularly difficult for me not being from a Structuralist/Medical Model background, but that I am planning to make it work, especially since I was fired with new vigour after my wonderful holiday in the sunshine.

"OK. Enough of that. You are particularly self-absorbed. And you are not as good at your job as you think you are." With that, he leaves the office. I remain, dumbfounded, and wondering whether I have just awoken from some strange Kafkaesque nightmare. Did I fail to participate in the scenario into which he was inviting me (Gergen 2009:165)? Did I act from my own ontological insecurity (Laing 1991)? Did I just go through a metamorphosis and did I just wake up as a bug on my back?

How is it possible that I had read all his signs so wrongly? Did I not understand his language at our departmental meeting where he held forth about how we were going to be "a unit; backing each other up" as a department?

> ***Reflection:*** Is the physical pain I'm experiencing as I typed this last line real? Did I not miss-remember? I know I did *not*. The tears of hurt, indignation, shame and anger stream unabatedly from my eyes – again - and I find myself close to hate ...

This particular moment is when I *knew* that I would be leaving The Hospital to take up my husband's offer of coming to South Africa on a sabbatical to write Stories. I knew that it would be *now* and not at the end of 2011 as originally planned. This moment was the moment that I knew *when* I had to engage with this inquiry. But "it is one thing to 'know' something, it is another thing to know something" (John K Smith 1996:85). I submit my resignation. I leave under much anger from the Head of Department. He refuses to speak to me at all after receiving the resignation or to say goodbye to me on my last day of work. "Thank you, Clinical Psychologist/(lay-) Pastor Mr. XX, for making the way clear to me." The three months of my resignation period was a time of valuation, evaluation and assessment of self(?) and others. *Why* do we do the things we do to others? More essentially, *How* do we do these things we do to others? I can speak with others about migration and I can speak to the topic of migration. All researchers cannot have authentic voices about all topics (Keith Ballard 1996b:105), but this is one topic on which this inquirer has an authentic voice. As I type the previous two sentences I realise that the word 'authentic' does not sit well within Social Construction languaging. It speaks of a certain 'truth' inherent to a concept. I am not referring to the notion that someone has the 'ultimate truth' about an experience or that this 'ultimate truth' is situated within a secret place within this specific individual. 'Authentic', when used in these and the following instances, speaks to me of a lived experience; an embodied knowing that goes beyond articulation.

As I spend time considering what it is that I want to learn from this inquiry it becomes increasingly clear to me that the ***Questions*** I want to ***Inquire*** about are: Does migration sway one's opinion of one's self as a person in the world? and does this opinion of one's self carry over into other areas of one's life?

In rereading this chapter, I realise that I use the term 'authentic' rather often. As I reflect on why this is so, I am reminded that I first came across the term (used in the way in which I am using it during this writing) in Carolyn Ellis' (2004) work. She questions whether one can remain 'authentic' whilst writing one's self into being. Upon reflection I become aware that the concept of 'authenticity' often fits rather easily with a more deterministic, individualistic, and me-centred approach – an approach that does not sit well alongside my preference for a more Social Construction-informed way of going about the world. As I scour the dictionary and thesaurus for other options to authentic, I find words such as *true, reliable, dependable, faithful, trustworthy, accurate, genuine, realistic, valid,* and *original*. The Encarta Dictionary: English (North America) includes the following descriptions of authentic (1) not false or copied: genuine and original, as opposed to being a fake or reproduction; and (2) shown to be true and trustworthy. In this writing my use of the word 'authentic' refers to that which is original and genuine and not deterministic or individualist. It also recognises that something gains its signification in our goings on together. I do not want to befuddle the writing with lengthy sequences of words describing 'authentic': I am thus using authentic intentionally as a descriptive term.

3. Aims of the Inquiry

Why do I want to inquire about this matter? What am I hoping to gain from such an inquiry? What are my ***Aims*** for this ***Inquiry***? I have three main aims. *Aim One* is to inquire into my own understanding of how I was affected by the world-of-migration; to reframe the more unpleasant aspects of my experiences into relational understanding; and to incorporate into my life-world these new understandings so that they might contribute towards a more aware version of myself. The challenge: "Physician, heal thyself"[3] lies at the centre of this aim.

> ***Reflection:*** I am aware that much of The Writing of Stories of Migration is about me and about my way-of-being. It is about the healing of the strips which were pulled from me, largely by persons that lay claim to the fact that they are Clinical Psychologists trained and Chartered and Registered in the UK and thus represent the gold standard of what Clinical Psychologists across the world should aspire to. I am aware that in conversing with other migrants, I may be seeking validation for my experiences. I am aware that all the other Inquiry Aims I stated are more of an out-flowing from my first stated aim than questions in and of themselves. Yet, I am aware that Postmodern inquiry takes one along paths never imagined. This is the path I am excited about traversing...

Aim Two is to invite other migrants into dialogue regarding their experience of migration: to discover whether their experience(s) have made a contribution to how they think about themselves now. I hope that dialoguing with the inquiry participants may clarify some aspects about their migratory experience(s) for them as well. The possibility of re-storying of their encounters might prove useful for them too.

Aim Three to write the stories in a way that might prove beneficial to those who employ migrants, befriend migrants and to the authorities who deal with migrants. I hope that the migrant's stories might sensitise employers, new friends(?) and the authorities worldwide to the diversity issues that need addressing when domiciling migrants. It might possibly spark advertising campaigns for the general public about how to go about people who are obviously 'not from here'. Every time a 'good' customer service-orientated cashier asks you a seemingly innocuous question such as: "… 'allo, Love. You no' from aroun' 'ere, ay? Whe' ya fro', then?" you are reminded that you do not belong and never will: your accent is just too different …

Although I reflected – one thought ago - that The Writing might principally be constitutive of my own healing, I have to assert that the writing is firmly political in nature (Hanisch 1969:1-5). I want to make a statement about how people from a different culture are treated by elitist, and other less elitist, groups within the workplace and elsewhere in their adoptive countries. I want to make statements about how, within workplace diversity, migrants' ''feelings' and experiences are often not considered but are walked over for the sake of being task-focused. Similarly, migrants' previous knowledge and experience are often discounted and ignored.

Conversations which explore the possibilities of what migrants might bring to the workplace – those skills and abilities which lie outside of a particular job description -might prove revolutionary to a particular place of work. The same might be said about what migrants might contribute to the community in general. For instance, I have experience around the matter of human trafficking and missing children; but which was sneered at when I offered it. Should inquirers who write from a Social Construction perspective then aim not towards the discovery of 'facts', but be more focused towards a more political orientation (Burr 1995:162)? Should focusing on bringing about knowledge

[3] Luke 4:23. The moral of the proverb is counsel to attend to one's own defects rather than criticizing defects in others.

for the sake of knowledge be a secondary aim of the inquiry? While I connect with Burr's assertion, I am aware of Melrose's (1996:51-53) warning about the value-ladeness of inquiry aims. Hopefully reflexivity will assist this inquirer in counteracting the effects of such possibly value-laden aims.

The aims of social constructionist researchers should consider the mobilisation of the research towards a different goal (Burr 1995:162). This goal has more of a political orientation: the research focuses on bringing about change for those who need it rather than the gathering of knowledge for the sake of knowledge. Dudley-Marling (1996:34) allayed some of my fears about my position within the inquiry – being seen as the 'expert' - by stating that being in research connects who we are in private with who we are in public; it connects the personal with the professional.

4. Inquiry Methodology

After considering the plethora of possibilities, the ***Inquiry Methodology*** which seemed most useful for discussing the inquiry questions and aims I had formulated was firmly grounded within Social Construction and within Postmodernism and Feminism. These two options will allow me the telling of The Stories in a cohesive and authentic way. I acknowledge that research can get rather "messy" (Ballard 1996b:105). What I propose to engage with at the outset of this inquiry might not be what I end up with.

> ***Reflection:*** I don't think Ballard's warning about the 'messiness' of research bothers me too much at this particular junction. I am back with my adopted personal mantra: 'Whatever. It is what it is' and I find comfort in the certainty that the process of the inquiry will prevail ...

4.1 Feminist Inquiry

As stated above, this inquiry will be situated within Feminism. Although I plan to use Auto (Relational) Ethnography and Narrative Analysis as the methodologies with which to go about the practicalities of the inquiry (please see below), I will continually weigh up my particular going about the inquiry in terms of how it fits with Feminism's non-pejorative, non-subjugating and equality seeking foundations. From now on - for the purposes of this inquiry and to avoid confusion - I will refer to Feminist Research as ***Feminist Inquiry*** (Hawkesworth 2006). I move from Feminist Research to Feminist Inquiry with a sense of ease: "Feminism supplies the perspective and the disciplines supply the method" (Rinehart 1992:243). I will remain with my feminist commitment: to stand against pejorative actions, subjugation and the perpetration of injustices; strengthened by with the belief that everyone's voice is just as worthy of a hearing, that no truth is the ultimate truth, and that an acceptance of diversity, multiplicity, equality and inclusiveness focuses our work:

> …the task of feminist inquiry is to develop an account of the world that places women's lives, experiences, and perspectives at the centre of analysis and in so doing, corrects the distorted, biased, and erroneous accounts advanced by men.
>
> (Hawkesworth 2006:3)

I would advocate that we could adopt Hawkesworth's statement to include all marginalised groups. Feminism's dedication to social reform and change appeals to me. As stated at the outset of this chapter, I prefer to describe The Writing as an inquiry rather than as research, which is more in keeping with Social Construction thinking and sits more easily with me.

I was first introduced to feminist research writing during 1998 whilst attending an Introductory Course on Narrative Therapy. I am now taken back to the feminist ideas which so inspired me then:

> … at the core of feminist ideas is the crucial insight that there is no one truth, no one authority, no one objective method which leads to the production of pure knowledge. This insight is as applicable to feminist knowledge as it is to patriarchal knowledge, but there is a significant difference between the two: feminist knowledge is based on the premise that the experience of all human beings is valid and must not be excluded from our understandings.
>
> (Dale Spender in Reinhartz: 1992:7)

It would appear as if Spender sees feminist inquiry as rather more of a perspective on an existing method in a given field than a given research methodology *per se*. Feminist inquiry is indisputably connected to all social matters as well as consciousness-raising issues. The question of how one can bring about change is inextricably linked to feminist inquiry. Feminist research can be described as being dual-visioned: it seeks to contribute to knowledge as well as to the welfare of all subjugated and minority groups (Reinharz 1992:251). Feminist research occupies the middle ground: the space between either/or, between black and white between what Foucault and Derrida called "binary opposites". Feminist researchers can - and must - speak *out* for others (Reinharz 1992:16). This is my *raison d'être* for this writing and for life!

It requires passion for a researcher to become immersed in a qualitative research project: passion for people, passion for communication and passion for understanding people (Janesick 1994:217). This passion finds itself rooted in the wellspring of one's bodily knowing, the somatic knowing that Heshusius and Ballard (1996a) alludes to. The recognition that research is now more accepting of the researcher's *being in research* is a far cry from the dispassionate stance which until very recently a researcher was expected to take up – and, in some fields, is still expected to take.

I remain concerned about my position within the inquiry. Am I inquiring because of my personal experiences? Am I inquiring because it is a necessary inquiry? Am I inquiring because I have the means to do so? These questions nag at me. My reading about Feminist Inquiry settles my mind. Extensive exploration of the literature regarding feminist research has led me to the conclusion that at the heart of feminist research is someone who is enchanted with the act of knowing, fully participating at the spiritual, psychological, emotional and somatic levels of their being (Heshusius & Ballard 1996b:4). I realised that this kind of being-in-research was as grounded as the dispassionate, emotionless, cold, measured research inherent in other paradigms, especially since "both a mindful body and an embodied mind are needed to tap into somatic and emotive sources of knowing" (Heshusius & Ballard 1996b:8). My fellow migrants had *become* my research as much as I had *become* my research (Ballard 1996a:30). Research has become more of a relationship than an activity – a relationship that acts *in* the world rather than *on* it (Heshusius & Ballard 1996c:172). It is in the process of finding one's own voice that one starts to understand the phenomenon one is inquiring into and thus become able to communicate one's understanding (Reinharz 1992:19). Auto (Relational) Ethnography, along with Narrative Inquiry, allows me to *fully* represent myself in and into the inquiry in my own voice …

What primarily draws me to feminist inquiry is the notion that feminist inquirers deal with issues that have no particular solutions. It makes space for the multi-layeredness or multi-storiedness, the polyvocality, of persons. In *Relation Being* Gergen (2009) speaks of persons as multi-beings: within relationships people reinvent themselves to become what the relationship calls for at any particular moment in time. [Gergen does not define relationship as necessarily the goings on between two or more people. He makes a case for the possibility of relationship happening within one's thinking, but without another party present.]

Fortunately, while delving into my squirrel-cache of literary sources I find the writing of Allen and Barber (1992:10-11). They attempt to deconstruct the notion of including the personal in feminist writing and research and conclude that self-disclosure is an important and unique part of feminist research methods. In fact, if the researcher did not engage in self-disclosure during the research project, the researcher would be with the participant(s)in an unethical way by seeking to maintain false neutrality towards the participant(s). Confronting one's personal experience with the issue at hand is an important part of the feminist inquiry process. When the inquirer self-discloses, it encourages the participant(s) to speak the unspoken.

Ann Bristow and Jody Esper regard the inquirer's self-disclosure as "true dialogue" that allows the participant(s) to become "co-inquirers" (Reinharz 1992:33). I have to agree with Susan Griffin's experience that she wrote "associatively and went underneath logic" (Griffin 1978:74). I experienced this during the knitting of my story into the yarn of the other stories I was told. Mary Simpson Poplin (1996:67) pleads for the researcher to be authentic. The process of being with the other storytellers during this inquiry touched and changed my life: it became a "relation rather than an activity" (Heshusius & Ballard 1996b:172). It would be disrespectful of me not to recount this fact. Heshusius and Ballard (1996a:2) speak of one's physical reaction towards the stories of others. Keith Ballard (1996b:105) stresses that while all researchers cannot have authentic voices in terms of all problems, researchers can address problems as the problems form part of the social arrangement of a society which fails to support the victims of the problems.

4.2 Auto (Relational) Ethnography

Feminist Inquiry is closely linked to Ethnography. Ethnography can broadly be described as the scientific study of human social phenomena and communities through various means, including fieldwork. The methodology of Auto Ethnography evolved from Ethnography (Bochner & Ellis 2002). I choose to position my inquiry within both ***Auto (Relational)Ethnography*** and Narrative Inquiry. Hopefully this combination will allow me to include my own voice along with the voices of other migrants and also to go about their stories in a way that might allow me to understand their tellings about their experiences as fully as possible.

Reflection: I state that I will position my writing within the framework of Auto Ethnography, yet this statement does not sit all that comfortably with me. For a start, I am rather more drawn to foregrounding the relational aspect of what it is that I am in the process of, rather than the 'Auto' aspect. Furthermore, I am not completely satisfied that what I am doing quite fits into the box labelled 'Ethnography'. Am I not rather in the process of Relational Inquiry? I shall inquire ...

Reflection on my Reflection: I finished a Skype conversation with Gita twenty minutes ago. Since then I have been staring at the screen of my computer. For once, I am happy that no process of osmosis is transferring my thoughts to the hard drive of my computer. I find myself confused by the Reflection I wrote before talking to Gita. I know that I did not insert myself into a community with the abject purpose of studying them. I know that I did not keep field notes. I know that the participants are not being studied, *per se*. I do want to effect social change. I do want to create awareness. I find myself in a liminal space and it is not all that comfortable ...

Reflection on my Reflection on my Reflection: It is now about six weeks later. I have not written anymore about my methodological considerations after my previously stated ponderings about my conversation with Gita. I have given much thought during the past six weeks to the dilemmas I described above. I have spoken with various colleagues and members of my PhD-cohort about the matter. The notion prevails: The process will take care of itself. Glaring discrepancies will root themselves out and the stories will be told in the way the stories need to be told…

During the time of my wonderings about Auto (Relational) Ethnography, Sheila talks to me about Gail Simon, who has completed her PhD Dissertation (Simon 2011). During the writing of her dissertation, Simon (2011) makes a strong case for choosing to refer to Auto Ethnography as Relational Ethnography. I contact Gail and she shares with me her completed Ph.D. Dissertation along with an article (Simon 2012) she has written on the topic. Gail proposes that Relational Ethnography suits her understanding of systemic practices better than what she understands as Auto Ethnography, which seems to be more of an individual telling of their own story. It is my interpretation of Simon's (2011 and 2012) work that she wishes to propose a methodology which speaks of co-creation of and more supportive/supported telling of narratives or stories – a Relational Ethnography:

> I am inspired by autoethnographic research to use myself as the starting point for investigation and write in transparent, detailed and literary ways about and from within practice conversations. I move towards proposing a model of Relational Ethnography which is more suited to systemic practice.
>
> (Simon 2011: 37)

Simon (2011:112) reflects my discomfort with a pure Auto Ethnographical writing style by emphasising that writing is "…a relational activity which needs to anticipate the reader with respect and helpfulness" (Gergen 2009b, Simon 2012). I have retained a discomfort with the term Auto Ethnography (Ellis 2004, Reed-Danahay 1997) as the prefix Auto doesn't sit very well with a social constructionist understanding of the place of co-creation in the production of meaning and narratives. For example, I am not telling 'my' tale in isolation of others. I anticipate responsive dialogical readership which includes participants in the texts, systemic colleagues, members of the public, and assessors of this doctoral portfolio.

As I agree with Simon's (2011 & 2012) propositions, I will forthwith refer to Auto Ethnography as Relational Ethnography. My previous references to Auto Ethnography have taken the format of Auto (Relational) Ethnography for the reasons developed by Simon (2011). It is to be noted that although Simon (2011 & 2012) is referring to systemic writing and whilst I am not making the same claim, the same argument holds water for my writing – I am endeavouring to bring to my writing a sense of co-creation, co-telling, co-writing and co-narrating, situated within a Social Construction discourse.

"*I choose to position my inquiry within **Relational Ethnography**, and **Narrative Inquiry**, as this combination will allow me to include my own voice along with the voices of other migrants and to also to go about their stories in a way that might allow me to understand their tellings about their experiences as fully as possible*." I wrote this as the last sentence before becoming entangled within the reflections above. The embodied knowing (Conquergood 1991:180) that I cannot go about this inquiry on my own hangs like a taunting dark cloud over my head. I realise that the methodology of this study will be about this and that and about the liminal space in-between the this and the that which I might find myself speaking into. In my search for something that will make sense of the swirls of possibilities eddying in my mind I find myself delving into my books, the mighty stash of articles on my computer's hard drive, and devouring the possibilities available to me in the libraries to which I have access. I find Holman Jones' (2005:763-791) chapter on Auto Ethnography useful:

> … how looking at the world from a specific, perspectival, and limited vantage point can tell, teach and put people into motion. It is about Auto Ethnography as a radical democratic politics – a politics committed to creating space for dialogue and debate that instigates and shapes social change. It does not act alone.

This sanctions my knowing that Relational Ethnography is the way I want to use to situate my voice and the voices of the other storytellers connected to this inquiry. Chang (2008:33 & 65) confirms that within a Relational Ethnographical study it is possible to include the voices of others along with my own. While I do not want to depart from allowing my own voice to be heard clearly within this inquiry, I have not collected field notes or kept journals of my findings. After all, I never expected to do such a study in the first place. I can only go by my memories: these are visceral and embodied and can be evoked with such a sense of clarity that it is impossible to discount them. The memorying is embedded in the fibres of my body. If I am to include the stories of others, I will need to co-opt another way of going about their stories. Enter Narrative Inquiry (see below). I march through the completed pages and adapt the writing to include Narrative Inquiry. I breathe a sigh of relief. It is now not only about me anymore, even though my voice is allowed to be heard in its full rememorying. Chang (2008:65) proposes that an Auto Ethnographic study can involve three possible groups: namely me; others as co-participants or co-storytellers; and others as the primary storytellers. During this inquiry, I will make use of her second option: the stories of other migrants along with my own story of migration.

Holman Jones (2005:764) authorises my notion of describing the in-between when working with the quagmire of migration. She asks so many of the questions which have haunted me from the beginning of this project. Questions such as: Will my writing be a writing of equilibrium and stasis or will it address the unspoken, unasked questions? Will it move anyone towards clarity and connection and change? How will I balance my voice with the voices of the other storytellers and with theory? Do I have the skills to I walk this tightrope? Will I be able to move theory and method into action in a way that makes sense? What do I include? What do I exclude? How do I go about the work in a responsible way whilst showing what is out there in the real world? The world of the mostly unspoken? The world of experience without words and wordiness? How much do I include? How much do I exclude of what has been written before on the various topics I am addressing? Will bending the rules be OK? Rules about writing an academic document, rules about inclusion and exclusion, rules about what to say and what not say, rules, rules, rules. Does my natural inclination towards always stepping over and away from rules to a place where many voices can be heard count here? Can I include all of my activist voice in this writing? Can I tell it like it is? Do I have to tone down my experience to make it 'pretty' and palatable for all? Is writing in this way selfish and self-absorbed? Holman Jones (2005:765) tells me that Auto Ethnography is about:

> Making a text present. Demanding attention and participation. Implicating all involved. Refusing closure or categorization….Believing that words matter and writing toward the moment when the point of creating autoethnographic tests *is* to change the world.

Auto Ethnography. It involves the challenge of the drama between representation, legitimation and praxis. What is the nature of knowing and how do we share what we know? Knowing is about inscribing culture into being and not about leaving it as a notion out there that is theorised about, but not lived. The challenge is to show how to express our embodied knowing; how to show that emotions are important in the understanding and theorising about self, power and culture; how to show that body and voice are both important in political ways; how to show how our selves are constructed and implicated in our tellings that move us towards change; and how to show that stories help us towards revising the world (Holman Jones 2005:767).

My writing is a performance, *albeit* a solitary performance at this particular time as I sit in my room, at my desk, on my own. Am I prepared for the conjoint performance it will instigate once my writing goes out there into a world populated by others? Gergen (2009) would argue the point with me about my writing being a solitary performance. Is the truth defendable that I am, at this very moment, experiencing a sense of embodied solitariness (not solitude – that has a different

connotation for me)? The computer, the books, the articles that surround me like a wall do not talk back to me in voices which my ears can hear. They do not have bodies that give off a certain type of heat or have enfolding arms that will shush me and say: "It will be okay", which is what I so need at this moment in time. Yet, I acknowledge that my solitary writing is a process of performing a certain social resistance. This is what I have always been about. How I wish I could find the black women who brought me into being as a baby, a toddler, a young child when my white, biological mother went about her colonial life. Were the stories I was told about my incessant crying, my refusal to stay with my mother, when they went home after a day's work already a performance of resistance against the *status quo* of that time? "Performance has long been a site and means for negotiating social, cultural, and political dialogue" (Holman Jones 2005:777). Maybe my crying was the start of my dialogic performance of resistance – on many levels. I am willing to participate in Holman Jones' (2005:784) performance when she invites her reader to "Recognise the power of the in-between…."; to "Stage impossible encounters…."; to "Contextualize giving testimony and witnessing…."; to "Create disturbances…"' and to "Make texts of an explicit nature…."

Self-narratives are valuable in learning about self and others. In the learning about self and others, a process of self-reflection becomes a possibility (Chang 2008:41). Self-narratives also tend to incorporate and embrace the sociocultural contexts of the stories being told. Chang (2008:43) situates Auto Ethnography within culture: "…Relational Ethnography shares the storytelling feature with other genres of self-narrative but transcends mere narration of self to engage in cultural analysis and interpretation." As cultures and individuals are inextricably intertwined she attempts in this way to bring "the out there" alongside "the in here".

I pick up Carolyn Ellis' *'The ethnographic I'* (2004). Its pages are literally coming away from the spine and falling apart in my hands. This book has made so many trips across the world (as well as umpteen trips to the corner shop to buy milk!) and has acted as my personal security blanket during times of personal tribulation. Are the loose pages in my hand now telling the book's own story? The pages cannot adhere to the spine anymore – it has taken too much battering. Staring at the loose pages and the battered cover of the book, I am reminded, viscerally, that I often felt like that as well. I still see people, other migrants, who have the same look. I will go about the stories I was told gently. I will not mess with these stories. I will keep them intact and allow their voices to speak along with my own. Respectfully. In the same way I am holding the book …

Ellis (2004:xvii) tells Valerie that Auto Ethnography is about starting with one's personal life whilst paying attention to your physical feelings, thoughts, emotions and then writing your experiences down as a story. Valerie asks her whether this means that she should write her own experiences down so she can generalise that to a larger group or culture. Ellis replies that it is about that and about much, much more. Auto Ethnography includes:

> … research, writing, story and method that connect the autobiographical and personal to the cultural, social and political. Autoethnographic forms feature concrete action, emotion, embodiment, self-consciousness, and introspection portrayed in dialogue, scenes, characterizations, and plot. Thus, autoethnography claims the convention of literary writing…
>
> (Ellis 2004:xix)

It would seem as if Ellis is committed to not knowing and to the possibilities that might arise from the writing. She seems committed to writing as a process of discovery and to putting herself into the writing. It seems that Auto Ethnography could be a process of writing myself into being; of opening up possibilities by which to view my experiences other than the narrow, dark, vengeful, mean-spirited meaning-making of the experience that now enfolds me. This process might be painful at

times – no, it *will* be painful at times, I am sure of that. And it will require courage to tell it like it is: with no holds barred; the good and the not so good and the stuff in-between; the liminal space where both sides of the binary oppositions haunt me.

Stories are how humans make sense of their worlds and are essential to our understanding. My stories about myself will re-inscribe my self-understanding. Ellis (2006:32) tells that her partner, Art Bochner, says that stories usually follow certain conventions. These conventions include people who are depicted as characters; a situation that provides the dramatic tension around which the story revolves and to where the solution of the story is aimed; a temporal ordering of the events in the story; and a point or moral of the story that provides an explanation of the story. This explanation normally gives meaning to the story.

If we speak of Relational Ethnography as writing about the personal and its relationship to culture, it is possible to sidestep the trap of being regarded as self-absorbed in our writing, even though our writing is in the first person. Relational Ethnography allows for making the personal political, for both/and rather than either/or and for seeking commonalities through our writing. Relational Ethnography writing allows for our visions to be broadened. Our experiences frequently narrow our vision as we focus on what we choose to remember. We also elect to de-memory those aspects that do not fit with the recounting of our stories during any given telling. Yet, we have to face the possibility that the telling might take us places we did not mean to go in the first instance. Remaking memory is what this particular story is about. It requires asking the question: "How could I have done it differently?"

Reflection: Did I *really* want to do it differently? How much of me is inscribed into the story as it played out? I instinctively duck. A thunderbolt from the great beyond has hit me. It's not actually that pleasant. Have I really become over-involved with one way of seeing…?

Chang (2008:52) names three specific benefits of Auto Ethnography: (1) it offers a research method which is friendly to authors and readers alike; (2) it enhances the cultural understanding of self and others; and (3) it brings forth cultural understandings that contribute towards cultures working together. She is rather specific when she states that auto ethnographical writing brings healings to the hurts of the past (2008:53). Yet she also warns that one should avoid the pitfall of becoming so involved with yourself during the writing that you lose track of those you are working alongside, together with neglecting the cultural perspectives that you bring to the writing. She mentions the danger of an over-reliance on your memory; of neglecting the necessary ethical considerations; and of inappropriately labelling your writing as Auto Ethnographical. These considerations are all important. I am mindful that I only have my memory to serve me during the writing. A memory that is as visceral as any piece of paper I may hold in my hand. How do I de-memory an embodied memorying of pain and denigration? I can restory, but can I forget? And if I did have a recording of a conversation or a copy of an email, does their meaning not rely on my interpretation of them? All the emails and conversations – which do indeed serve to substantiate memory - are floating in the universe. When I wrote them, it was not with the intention of using them for the purposes of any writing. Does this then exclude me from writing in a Relational Ethnographical manner?

Perhaps a caveat will help the reader here. In this inquiry I am attempting to study the multi-voiced representations of experience - by way of Relational Ethnography and Narrative Inquiry- and not the experience in and of itself. This inquiry is an attempt to look into the stories that people have told

about their experience of migration to thus gain an understanding about the cultures in which they participate. It is *not* an attempt to predict the future by studying individuals.

4.3 Narrative Inquiry

Reisman and Speedy (2007:429) define Narrative Inquiry as follows:

> People shape their daily lives by stories of who they and others are and as they interpret their past in terms of these stories. Story, in the current idiom, is a portal through which a person enters the world and by which their experience of the world is interpreted and made personally meaningful. Narrative Inquiry, the study of experience as story, then, is first and foremost, a way of thinking about experience. Narrative Inquiry as a methodology entails a view of the phenomenon. To use Narrative Inquiry methodology is to adopt a particular view of experience as phenomenon under study.

Chase (2005:651) reminds her readers that Narrative Inquiry is a field in the making. She sees Narrative Inquiry as retrospective meaning-making and "an amalgam of interdisciplinary lenses, diverse disciplinary approaches, and both traditional and innovative methods – all revolving around an interest in biographical particulars as narrated by the one who lives them." For Denzin and Lincoln (2005:641): "Narratives are socially constrained forms of action, socially situated performances, ways of acting in and making social sense of the world." Narrative Inquiry is thus the process of gathering information for the purpose of research through storytelling. The researcher then writes a narrative of the experience:

> Humans are storytelling organisms who, individually and collectively, lead storied lives. Thus, the study of narrative is the study of the ways humans experience the world.
> (Connelly & Clandinin 1990:2-14)

Temporality, sociality and place serve as a conceptual framework through which Narrative Inquiry researchers are able to inquire into the relational compositions of persons' lived experiences (Connelly & Clandinin 2010: 436-441). *Temporality* refers to the past, present and future of events, people, places and things. We are constantly revising our biographies as we go about our lives. *Sociality* refers to the attention given to personal and societal conditions presented during any given narrative. It also, importantly, includes the relationship between the inquirer and the storytellers. *Place* refers to the physical place in which the narratives under inquiry are located.

Inquirers are able to situate themselves in a relational way to their storytellers or in a way that is more at a distance (Clandinin & Huber 2010:436-441). Both positions are important in this inquiry. Although I share personal relationships with all the storytellers except Alana, only two of them were in close proximity during the time of the interviews. According to Clandinin and Huber, a Narrative Inquiry is still feasible in these circumstances. *How* stories are told seems to be shaped by the audience. White (2007) demonstrates convincingly how persons select and deselect what they tell or withhold during the telling of a story according to the audience present.

Following Clandinin and Huber (2010:436-441), as researcher, I need to justify my research on three levels, namely (1) *personal* justification – how does it fit with my life experiences? (2) *practical* justification – it is sometimes necessary for narrative inquirers to adopt other methodologies than those originally preferred, and (3) *social* justification – this aspect asks and answers the So what? and Who cares? questions.

The practical aspects of Narrative Inquiry include aspects such as the *naming* of the phenomenon one is inquiring into. Will the inquiry challenge the dominant story of the phenomenon? Thus in this inquiry: Is all migration shrouded by hardship and suffering? Narrative Inquirers mostly inquire into phenomena such as liminality, truth as universal, the not-knowing or un-knowing: "Narrative Inquiry is concerned with analysing and criticising the stories we tell, hear and read in the course of work. It is also concerned with the myths that surround us and are embedded in our social interactions" (Webster & Mertova 2007:7).

The significance of Narrative Inquiry lies in its exploration of new ways of viewing research and conducting research – ways which address human performance in a variety of environments. Storytelling and inquiry come together in ways that are enriching to the lives of the storytellers and the world at large. Numbers and statistics are held at bay and people are allowed to give voice to their experiences in a way that allows them to be heard rather than counted.

Narrative Inquiry methods include field notes, interviews, journals, letters, autobiographies, and orally told stories. For the moment this assuages my earlier concern about how it is that I have not gathered reams of field notes: "Research is a collaborative document, a mutually constructed story out of the lives of both researcher and participant" (Connelly & Clandinin 1990:9).

Narrative researchers focus on the ways in which people "produce, represent, and contextualize experience and personal knowledge through narratives" (Coffey & Atkinson 1996:54). The aim of Narrative Inquiry is to understand how people structure their experiences to make sense of events and actions in their lives. As such, it relies upon a person's natural impulse to tell stories about the past and their personal experiences (Schram 2006:104-108). Narrative inquirers use the stories people tell, rather than the people themselves, as their way of looking into the world. Narrative inquirers are interested in how people present their stories and how they recount their stories with an audience in mind - it studies personal experience and meaning. Narrative Inquiry is appropriate to many social science fields. The entire field of study is often used in disciplines such as literary theory, history, anthropology, drama, art, film, theology, philosophy, psychology, linguistics, education, politics, nutrition, medicine, and even aspects of evolutionary biological science.

Schram (2006:104-108) outlines six basic assumptions of the narrative inquirer: (1) people story their experiences to help them makes sense of, make meaning of and contextualise the fibres of their lives, (2) the stories people tell are natural, obvious and authentic as telling stories is a natural occurrence in most people's lives, (3) narratives are inherently sequential, (4) how people tell stories influences how they experience their lives at any given time, (5) narratives can be real or imagined, but they do not lose their power in either instance, and (6) stories need a voice – a story is always told by someone.

Temporality forms an important feature of Narrative Inquiry. Temporality refers to the assumption that by locating experiences, people, events or ideas in time is a natural way to think about them. These aspects – experiences, people, events or ideas – are an expression of something happening over time and, as such, it has a past, a present and an implied future. Narrative inquirers are interested in the here and now, but also in the how it is that an event acquired meaning over time and how that meaning might change in the future.

Within the realm of Narrative Inquiry, it is important to remain aware of the practice of how one makes meaning by means of the use of stories or narratives, and how that practice is linked to the language that is available to one and the cultural meaning one ascribes to that which is locally and historically specific. Laurel Richardson regards language as a constitutive force which creates a

particular view of reality and of the self (Richardson 2005:960). Stories – and the language we use to narrate them - are thus rooted in history – our own personal history or one's cultural history (Peräkylä 2005:869-886). Clandinin and Huber (2010:436-441) describe Narrative Inquiry as being "the study of experience understood narratively."

5. Inquiry Process

5.1 Participants and Story Collecting

Authentic participation in a research project means sharing in the way research is conceptualised, practised and brought to bear on the life-world of the participants. It also infers ownership of the research by the participants, which, in turn, implies responsible agency by the participants in the production of knowledge and the improvement of practices. It calls for a collaborative stance towards the project, by both the researcher and participant(s). Collaboration in terms of the project ensures co-inquiry *by* the participants and not research *on* the participants. The coercion of and control over participants by the researcher is minimised when the researcher adopts a stance of co-inquiry by participants rather than research on participants. By striving for a position of 'insiderness' on the part of the participants and the researcher, collaboration becomes part of a shared research goal (McTaggart 1997b:28-29).

The relationship between the participant and researcher is one of reciprocity (Lather 1991:60). The participant and researcher are in a *both/and* rather than *an either/or* relationship. The researcher and participant are both pupil and teacher and all parties are co-labouring towards the same goal. This co-labouring towards the same goal undermines the chances of what Foucault terms "the indignity of speaking for others" (Lather 1991:99).

Feminist inquirers often express a sense of connection or rapport with the people involved in the inquiry project. This frequently lasts beyond the duration of the inquiry project and goes beyond the realm of the project. It enters the personal lives of the individuals involved as well as adding to the inquirer's changing sense of self. This sense of connection is often what characterises the feminist inquirer. Feminist inquirers give direct assistance to the persons whose stories they tell. This assistance is typical of the embodiment of the ethic of care that typically forms part of the feminist inquirer.

Although such rapport is often presumed in feminist inquiry, we also need to be aware of the possible structural barriers ensconced in feminist inquiry: barriers such as class differences, ideological differences and gender differences. These increase the likelihood that the feminist inquirer's involvement in the lives of the inquiry participants will be accompanied by ambiguity and controversy. Rapport with inquiry participants should not be viewed as the only core prerequisite for feminist research. Relationships of respect, shared information, openness and clarity of communication are equally valuable during the inquiry process.

The feminist inquirer often uses a particular style of writing during the reporting of the inquiry narrative to intrigue and capture the reader. The practices she employs may include first person voice, quotes from interviews, self-disclosure by the inquirer, addressing the reader, and the inclusion of documentation like letters. (Peräkylä 2005:869-886; Reinharz 1996:263-269).

What follows is a recounting of the participants, or storytellers, involved in this inquiry, how they have come to forming part of the inquiry and how it is that others de-selected themselves. I compiled the first draft of the Story Guide ('Interview Questions') (see Appendix Two) by using the kind of questions I had learned to ask as a Narrative Practitioner. My guides here were Freedman and Combs (1996a). The Life Story Interview (Atkinson, 1998) proved a useful additional guide to

formulating the questions. To test the applicability and appropriateness of the questions I was planning in using for the interviews, I requested two of my peers to review the questions and make suggestions regarding their usefulness. I incorporated most of their suggestions into the final version of the Story Guide. I also set up a conversation with a family member (Coenie) who had recently come back from Taiwan. At the end of this conversation, Coenie gave me invaluable feedback about his experience of the conversation and questions. He suggested which questions I should possibly consider deleting as they did not mine sufficiently the richness of his experience of migration and other questions which I might consider including. I reworked the Story Guide to include his suggestions as well as the thoughts I had had during our interview.

To draw participants, I then emailed all those people I knew personally who had been through the migratory process at some stage during their lives (see Appendix One). The email explained the formative ideas about the inquiry; asked them to engage with the inquiry by completing the attached Story Guide; informed them that they could remain anonymous during the completion of the Story Guide; and asked them to forward the Story Guide to anyone they thought would be interested in forming part of the inquiry. Alana was the only person, in addition to my initial email list, who chose to take part in the inquiry and completed the Story Guide. She initially completed the Story Guide in Russian, which our mutual friend, Valentina, translated. Only one of the storytellers chose to use a pseudonym.

I filled out the Story Guide personally before I had read any of the responses from the storytellers. I thought that it would be useful if I could narrate my experiences and impressions without knowing what the stories were that the other storytellers had told. I wrote my story in as honest and truthful a way as I possibly could – without being the inquirer. I did not find this part difficult. What I did find difficult, however, was the extent of the Story Guide. I realised that completing it was a truly onerous task. It had not seemed such when I had had the face-to-face conversation with Coenie. It increased my sense of having been enormously privileged by the storytellers whom had taken the time and effort to complete the Story Guide. I had face-to face conversations with Coenie, Jesse, Danielle, Gita and Gabriella. All the other storytellers responded by email.

It perturbed me initially that I had been unable to have face-to-face conversations with all the storytellers, especially because at that stage I held as a 'truth' the idea that conversations could only be managed in person. Markham (2005:793-820), who quotes Gergen (1991), opened my eyes to the possibilities offered by new technologies. She suggests that as we are saturated in technologies, not to exercise the possibilities of inquiry via the technology available to us would limit our options. When one considers the different population groups represented by the storytellers, it becomes reasonable that I could not have conducted face-to-face conversations with each of them. At the time of gathering the stories, I was in South Africa and Skype or telephone conversations were prohibited by connectivity and cost respectively.
The following is a summary of the stories represented in this inquiry:

1. *Margot* INQUIRER (South African/British): has lived and worked in Taiwan, England and Wales
2. *Heike* (German): is living and working in England
3. *Kon* (Sudanese): was schooled in Egypt, but now living and working in Canada
4. *Penny* (Rhodesian/Zimbabwean) : is living and working in South Africa
5. *Phenyo* (South African): has lived and worked in England and returned to South Africa after seven years
6. *Stella* (Greek): studied and worked in the USA and currently works and lives in England
7. *Coenie* (South African): has lived and worked in Taiwan, but now lives in South Africa
8. *Alina* (Moldavian): lives and works in Italy
9. *Gabriella* (Hungarian): lives in Canada

10. *Danielle* (Jewish Egyptian):lives and works in Canada
11. *Gita* (Jewish Polish/Canadian): lives and works in Canada
12. *Kate* (British): lived in the USA, lived and worked in Morocco and now lives and works in Switzerland
13. *Jesse* (Congolese): has lived in Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda and now lives in the USA

I will discuss how I propose to go about the processing of the stories offered in Section Seven of this chapter (see below).

5.2 Cultural Considerations

Culture can be defined in terms of the "characteristic substance and forms of the language and discourses, activities and practices and social relationships and organisation that constitute the interactions of the group" (McTaggart 1997:31) Cultural markers are pervasive: "…everywhere we turn, culture is the basis of some sort of classification, of whether people receive or are denied resources, of whether specific policies operate or not" (Krause 1998:1).

While reading the stories told by Barbara Wingard and Jane Lester (Wingard & Lester 2001) I was again struck by the fact that to disregard one's culture - or in this instance, the culture of the inquiry participant - would be to discount that person's being-in-the-world of someone. We should always take into account the culture of the people with whom we are journeying:

> We must make it possible for people to be able to tell their stories in ways that are right for them. With Aboriginal people this means thinking through what would be a comfortable place for the conversations. It might mean sitting out on the lawn. The conversation might not be called counselling, but instead just talking together under the trees. Sometimes the environment and the way that people sit together makes it more likely for people to tell their stories. We also need to take care how we begin our conversations …. This process all happens before we think about talking about our own lives….Our people understand the significance of our stories ….As Indigenous people of this country, our stories are precious.
>
> (Wingard & Lester 2001: vi-vii)

The commitment to remain aware of the differences in our cultures requires a continual commitment to practise mutual transparency and accountability – both on a personal level and also in terms of the co-inquiry project. Most postmodern, social constructionist, feminist and narrative authors regard transparency and accountability as vital matters when cultural differences are at play in any relationship, whether of a therapeutic or inquiry nature.

Transparency and accountability also reflect a certain ethical stance. I strove to position myself in such a way that I was more likely to be transparent about my association with certain ideologies – such as gender, patriarchy, feminism, liberalism, postmodernism. I found that being open and transparent also brought safety into the relationships, even those in cyberspace, and allowed me to position myself outside of the role as the "expert" (White 1991; Freedman & Combs 1996a; Elliot 1997).

Accountability refers to being open about the possible "privileged" position I might be seen to have in my relationship with the persons who shared their stories of migration with me. Most of them had already been abused and exploited by various 'experts' in their lives. My sense of ethics and integrity forbade me to position myself in such a way that I could be counted as another one of their exploiters. I was very aware that my constructed reality was not necessarily their constructed reality. I was careful not to allow my experience of migration to influence their respective

experiences. Accountability allowed me to be upfront about how I wanted to create an environment in which each person could tell their own story, whether face-to-face with me or via email. While it is fortunate that the notion of power did not seem to have been an issue with the email stories, I am uncertain as to whether this imbalance was completely addressed during the face-to-face interviews. All the people with whom I had face-to-face conversations assured me that they were comfortable with the way in which their respective conversations had played out: they had not at any time experienced a sense of power interplay.

On scanning my available literature on culture and ethnicity, I am confronted with the decision about how deeply I want to venture into the quagmire of the culture debate for the purposes of discussing the cultural differences between me and the people who told me their stories and how these differences influenced their telling. I am fully aware that I might appear obtuse when I lay claims to the notion that these differences did not play a significant role. While I acknowledge that I could quite possibly be challenged regarding 'evidence blindness', I am certain that the fact that we all originated from different cultures did not play as significant a role as the fact that we were unified by the knowing that as migrants, we were "all from the same side."

I was indeed aware of the cultural differences between us and that that these cultural differences might impact on our respective virtual and/or physical relationships to a certain extent. Would it suffice to list some of these cultural differences? If culture is indeed a social construction and thus maintained, reconstituted and changed through social and private, general and intimate (Krause 1998:4), would it not also mean that the storytellers and I could then reconstitute our own space where culture, as previously defined, is not an issue although there may be an awareness on all our sides of the possibility of it being/becoming an issue? A space where a curiosity about our 'differentness' makes us similar, if not necessarily the same? A space where we are similar in our formed-over-time understanding of our specific relationships? A space where we could create our own story? (Howard 1991:192). I suggest that this is possible as it happened in this way:

> Cross-cultural awareness is a *way of life* and need no longer be consciously sought. The individual is comfortable in all human environments, responding appropriately, but effortlessly and spontaneously. Although the individual is aware of how others, be they of majority or minority background may perceive his or her actions and responses, this is not a major factor determining behaviour in cross-cultural situations.
>
> (Goodyear 1992:207)

During the course of this project, the following cultural possibilities (I am aware that this list is not exhaustive) were considered: all of us (the storytellers and I) are migrants; I am aware that in at least one instance language was difficult (Alana speaks no English and her Russian story had to be translated by a mutual friend); I could also be seen as exploitative of the situation as most of the storytellers share a personal relationship with me, irrespective of our cultural background. It is important to note that I had *chosen* to step into the role of migrant and had not at any point in time during this process been in physical danger or without an income or some form of stability. For at least two of the storytellers, this was not the case and needs to be made visible.

Creating space for participatory actions between the other storytellers and I meant that we had to negotiate the inquiry process collaboratively. In the following section I elaborate on how this inquiry process was co-constructed between us.

6. Inquiry Procedures

Much of this inquiry is a lived experience for me and a process of "writing myself into being" (Heshusius 1996b:130). I have lived as a migrant over the past decade. I described myself as "a

migrant" when I returned to South Africa, my country of origin, after nearly ten years away. My experience as migrant was one of not fitting in and not belonging and not understanding all the language-games at play. In this inquiry procedure I was curious to understand more about other people's experiences as migrants. The inquiry procedure of this inquiry thus reflects more of a selection of relevant information from lived experience for all the storytellers concerned and less of procedural decisions that were exactly followed, but, if I were to attempt an outline of the research procedure, it would include the following:

- Collecting information by means of emails or face-to-face conversations
- Compiling a written inquiry narrative
- Submitting the written inquiry narrative to the other storytellers for verification
- Discussing and making the changes suggested by the other storytellers
- Incorporating the changes
- Resubmitting the written inquiry narrative to the storytellers
- Finalising the inquiry narrative by incorporating their closing comments.

7. Exploring the Stories

I searched high and low for guidelines on how to go about the process of exploring the stories I had been offered. All the sources I consulted mentioned that they had engaged in the process of analysis of their data, but no author explained the how. I happened upon Heewon Chang (2008). She devotes a chapter to "Managing Data" and another to "Analyzing and Interpreting Data." As I read her suggestions, I realised that my daughter had instinctively known more about what I may need in this regard than I did. One of her "Welcome Home Mummy" gifts (which I had mentioned before) had been a set of 12 coloured pens. They proved to be exactly what I needed for my "data management"! I followed Chang's suggestions almost to the letter during my exploration of the stories I had been offered. What follows is a broad outline of this process.

Although Chang (2008:115) suggests that one organises one's data from the start, I chose not to access the stories I had been offered until I had personally completed the Story Guide. I wanted my Story Guide as unadulterated as possible. The only way I could achieve this was by not having myself influenced by the stories others had told. As I received the stories, I printed them and kept them in a folder. I had recorded the face-to-face conversations during the conversations and subsequently had them transcribed. These transcriptions were filed along with the unread stories. My first conversation(s) were in a group situation with Danielle, Gabriella and Gita. These were more unstructured as their conversations happened spontaneously. This was followed by Coenie's more structured conversation. Jesse's interview was the last of the stories I collected. All the stories, mine included, were explored simultaneously and in exactly the same manner. Chang (2008:116-123) lists labelling and classifying as aspects of data organisation. She then progresses to data refinement. She offers a diagram of the process she chooses to follow.

My methodology of going about exploring the stories is very closely linked to how Chang (2008:116-123) proposes one should manage this task. The variations are in terms of the applicability of her process to the current inquiry. Her cycle evolves as follows:

Figure 6: Dynamics among data collection, management and analysis (Chang 2008:122)

This inquiry has one document (data) set – a data set refers to data bound by one collection strategy within one timeframe. From the outset of the inquiry I intended to limit the documents to one set so as to allow them the attention they needed. I was aware from the start that the scope of the dissertation would allow me to go about a thorough exploration of merely one set of data. The data was labelled by theme in different PostIt colours. The themes were underlined by different coloured pens on the working copies I had printed (the coding process). I conceptualised presenting my exploration of the stories in a two-columned format: *Column One (Storytellers' Stories),* would contain our stories; and *Column Two (Theoretical Reflections),* would contain reflections on all the stories from the pertaining and previously discussed theory.

The snippets I include show examples of a cross section of the stories – both similarities and differences - for each of the questions posted by the Story Guide. In this manner all the questions on the Story Guide received equal attention. It was my desire to include equally both the voices who are in agreement with my migratory experience and those who are not. I hoped that - by giving voice to all the voices and all the positions these voices hold - the thin stories present may be re-inscribed into thicker, more useful, more preferred stories. An inquiry is nevertheless also a messy process. All the best laid plans are often those that go awry. As my understandings changed during the reading of the stories I had to renegotiate the themes a few times during the first stories I explored. The formatting of my columns also changed significantly over time as I worked with the information that surfaced from the stories.

The last chapter, Chapter Seven – Making Sense of Sense-making - pulls together the knowledges gained from the inquiry process and offers possibilities for further exploration and the confirmations of ideas previously held, as well as the refuting of ideas previously held. Information (data) collection, analysis and interpretation activities all inform each other in a cyclical way. They are always emergent, unpredictable and unfinished (Chang 2008:122). In this inquiry my focus is not on predictable and finished results, but on a more informed understanding of and about culture and a move away from less preferred stories. At the heart of this inquiry lies the possibility of societal change and not whether it is right or wrong in its analytical process. Thus no "ultimate truths" will be uncovered: that is not the aim of this process.

8. Inquiry Narrative

The current document is the main format of my inquiry narrative (report). This document will be published in book format and offered to the universities in the Netherlands, along with an electronic format of the inquiry narrative. I hope to rework the inquiry narrative into a less academic version to make it more easily accessible by the general public as well as those whose lives are touched in some way by migration: people who have migrant relatives or friends; people who have already migrated; people who are considering migration; and those authorities who have to deal with migration. Finally, I share every scholar's hope that this work will be accepted as a journal article.

9. Ethical Considerations – Transparency, Reflexivity, Accountability

9.1. Introduction

> In the process of negotiating relationships in the field, how quickly I have come to understand my position as one of privilege! It is highly privileged because of the personal and delicate information I have that has the potential to harm relationships (Patrice, Reconnaissance Report 1, July 2001).
>
> (in Schram 2006:137)

Ethical considerations regarding research are about how it is that we enter mindfully into the world of our study participants and how is it that we go systematically about our effort at inquiring into

the matter at hand. How will I, for instance, go about the examining of the stories I entrusted to me? How will I deal with becoming quite close to some of the storytellers by way of this inquiry? Am I settled about the idea that the inquiry is to become a representation of the stories of all the storytellers and, thus, a representation of a meaningful part of their lives?

This immediately raises the question of ownership: "As the researcher do I own this story because I am telling it?" The answer would be a resounding "No!" The story belongs to each of the storytellers who contributed to the telling of this story. The story also belongs to each migrant – past, present and future - who might in some way benefit from the telling. These benefits may include a wider acknowledgement that migration is indeed a challenging situation or in the social change that it may inform.

Apart from the question of ownership, Schram (2006:137-148) mentions four other ethical considerations: (1) the inquirer's dual responsibility: I have a responsibility toward the storytellers (myself included) and towards the bigger narrative - the inquiry as a whole; (2) the interplay between disclosure and exchange: I need to be aware – that while I do hold some knowledges that replicates those knowledges which the storytellers bring to the inquiry, it is their stories that must be foregrounded during their telling. I must be able to work within the in-between created between us to create an environment where I am able to disclose enough so that I may earn trust, but not so much that I encumber or overwhelm the tellings; (3) I must make the private public in a sensitive way – a way which will not compromise anyone; and (4) I must stay in touch with the storytellers after the stories have been told so as to be mindful of how the tellings of the stories might have impacted the storytellers lives and also to give them continuous feedback regarding the process we are involved in as a group of migrants who have told our stories to the world.

Another ethical consideration was the use made of technology. I had to defend myself robustly against questions like: "Why did you use email interviews as way to access the memories?" and "What about nuances central to face-to-face interaction you are going to lose?' The irony is that the email responses to the Story Guides proved to be far more sharing in their nature than the face-to-face interviews. While I could offer various speculations of why this may be the case, in this instance my longstanding experience as a therapist seems to suffice. I suggest that, that within the therapeutic environment it takes on average least three to four sessions with a new client to establish an environment in which safety and trust can be negotiated and difficult stories told. I was mindful during the listening to the face-to-face stories that I was there as a co-storyteller and not as a therapist. I was mindful that my questioning had to remain close to the questions I had used on the Story Guide and to not infuse my questions with the flavour of a therapeutic conversation. My position as co-storyteller (and not therapist) enables me to justify why email interviews could be acceptable as a form of the rememorying I was hoping to access. At no time did I ever regard the responses offered by any of the storytellers as cold, hard data. I always respected them as offerings by the storytellers from their life experiences.
Muhr (2004) offers some useful comments on using technology in research:

> In an astute analysis, [A.J.] Muhr compares blogs to more traditional, objective research: on-line informational blogs to taking field notes, and on-line journals with an emphasis on telling and analyzing a good story to autoethnography. Many on-line diarists, she says, are 'still in the field note stage of autoethnography, a listing of events, peppered with feelings and random or tangential thoughts.' Some 'write evocatively with concrete detail, action, and dialogue. They tell a real story. They help me understand more about them, myself, society, the world.... That's the stuff of autoethnography!'
>
> (Muhr 2002 in Ellis 2004:213)

While Muhr (2002) may well be referring to on-line journaling, the only difference in responding to a story guide via e-mail (rather than face-to-face) is that it affords the storyteller/autoethnographer the opportunity to revise and change what has been written before. Markham (2005:793-820) quotes the following two participants in her study:

> …in cyberspace, one dwells in language. and through language.
> i exist as myself in language online... it feels more like being me than i sometimes feel offline
> … i think myself in language is more communicative of who i am.
> and because i'm a good writer, eloquence makes me beautiful …
>
> Sherie, online interview participant

> Here, I can edit what I think before I say it. This makes communication easier between my friends and i. There are fewer errors in meaning when our thoughts have been written clearly.
>
> Robin, online participant

Sherie and Robin's response reflects my experience of the emailed story guide responses I received. The personal editing evident within new face-to-face conversations seemed to be absent during the productions and/or representations of the e-mailed versions of the responses. Markham (2005:794) alerts me to how the internet can shape responses and interactions and, of particular significance to this inquiry, of how the internet is able to erase identity and culture from communications. Should this be a variable that I should regard within this inquiry, taking into consideration that I know all of the storytellers personally, except for Alana?

Another ethical step that I took was to give each storyteller with whom I had spoken face-to-face a transcript of their story so that they could change (include or delete) any part they wished. This was an attempt at remaining equitable as those storytellers who had completed the online version of the story guide could alter their finally submitted version as much and as often as they wished before sending it on to me. None of the storytellers I had interviewed chose this option.

This inquiry narrative of our stories takes the form of a chapter where snippets from all the stories were collated and reflected upon from various theoretical standpoints. Once I had completed this section of the inquiry, I submitted it to all the storytellers for their opinions on how they were represented. I then incorporated their suggested changes into the final version of the chapter (see Chapter Six below). This was my attempt not to assume the other through their texts/conversations and so to cloud their stories by viewing them through my (possibly) tainted glasses. [*Having pointed out the possibility of othering the co-storytellers, I also run the risk of othering myself by presenting a personal view of having endured only hardship during my (continuing) years of migrancy.*]

From the outset, this narrative has been a collaborative attempt, between the storytellers and myself, to write up our story. We hope that the writing might in some way open up other dialogues of change. As expressed earlier, I anticipate that this inquiry narrative might be reworked into a book for the commercial market, which will in turn contribute towards creating awareness regarding migration – for those who are on their way and for those who are already there, as well as for those who come into contact with migrants in some way or other.

9.2 Ethical considerations in General

Feminist inquiry requires me to go about research ethically (Oleson 2003:361-371). The ethical standards that guide feminist practice arise from assumptions about the nature of truth. These assumptions characterise certain ways of thinking and knowing, and thus represent an

epistemology/ontology or worldview. Such a worldview is not something that someone simply has because of his/her gender, but is rather something that develops over time through intellectual and political struggles against inequality.
My commitment to taking a feminist ethical stance in this inquiry will include considering the following questions (Allen & Barber 1992:1-15):

- Am I making the world a better place for subjugated persons?
- Am I prepared to allow the personal to become the political?
- Am I prepared to adopt open and inclusive inquiry methods?
- Am I prepared to self-disclose to avoid false neutrality?
- Am I prepared to speak the unspoken?
- Am I prepared to engage in a position of reflexivity?
- Am I prepared to stand with those who form part of the inquiry?

Dirk Kotzé (2002:1-34) discusses the need for engaging in participatory ethics, or, as Heshusius and Ballard (1996a) express it: "knowing *with* the other – a participatory process distinct from a Western perspective *of knowing the other* or *about the other*." During this inquiry I was concerned that we, as migrants, who (often) in the past had been silenced and marginalised due to our being in a place other than our various countries of birth, should be equal participants who could benefit from participating in this inquiry.

Kotzé (2002:18) comments that by engaging in participatory ethics, "[t]hose who have a voice and power have an ethical obligation to use the privilege of their knowledge/power to ensure participation with the marginalised and silenced, to listen *to* them, but not to decide *for* them, and to engage in participatory solidarity *with* them." As such, my central and guiding challenge as researcher is to be guided by the question, "Who benefits?" (Kotzé 2002:18). "Who benefits?" raises ethical considerations of transparency, reflexivity and accountability. These will be discussed more fully, although not exhaustively, due to the constraints incumbent to the writing of a dissertation.

9.2.1 Transparency. Transparency in the therapeutic process refers to the practice of deconstructing the hierarchy that is based on unrevealed expert ideas about what is best for the client. If the therapeutic process is to be co-creative, then transparency allows for the process to be shared between the therapist and client. In this way the therapist can bring knowledge to the relationship and the client has an equal voice in deciding what is acceptable or not. White (1991:30), in describing therapeutic practices, states that the therapist needs to be "transparent" about his/her own values, explaining enough about his/her situation and life experiences that people understand him/her as a person rather than viewing him/her as an expert or conduit for professional knowledge. Situating comments helps to flatten the hierarchical structure that positions the therapist as the expert (Freedman & Combs 1996a:276). The practice of transparency does not, however, centre the therapist, or inquirer in this case, as it allows the client/participant to ask questions, make comments and take decisions about where s/he wants to take his/her story (Friedman 2001:219-220).

Transparency in this inquiry process required that I consider the same issues, especially as I was going to be the one overtly benefitting from the interview: it was going to contribute to my writing this inquiry narrative and being awarded a PhD-degree in due course. Transparency also required an awareness that my being in the room with the storytellers needed to be of a very particular nature as they were potentially likely to be speaking, or at least thinking, about distressing event in their lives.

Participatory discussions - where ideas are not imposed and choices are free - around the issues concerning values and ideologies helped the us (storytellers and I) to explore and navigate our positions, the effects of our positions and what ideas and practices we preferred in our going on together within the telling of the stories. I attached a covering letter (Appendix One) to the story guide for those stories told via email. This explained our respective positions. The storytellers were free to decide whether they were willing to tell their stories. I had hoped that this inquiry might be as multi-voiced as possible, taking into account the constraints of storytellers from across the world who were invited to participate. Approximately 90% of those I had approached did not agree to tell their stories. More than half of those who did tell their stories, had heard about my inquiry from others and had elected to participate without having been approached in the first instance.

9.2.2 Reflexivity. According to the Social Construction discourse, reflexivity refers to the way that theory reconstitutes the role of the research participants, their relationship to the researcher and the significance of their tellings. The significance of the tellings of the research participants implies that the telling is simultaneously a description of the event and also part of the event due to the constitutive nature of talk. Reflexivity also refers to the reflections of the Social Construction discourse on other theories (Burr 1995:161).

Steier (1991:2) describes reflexivity as a "bending back on itself." It is a circular process which views the constant questioning of oneself with regards to one's inquiry methodology and the inquiry process in general as an integral part of the inquiry. Self-reflexivity unavoidably leads to ethical considerations. Reflexivity is liberating rather than debilitating (Steier 1991:168). Reflexivity allowed me to be *in* the inquiry. It protected me from taking an expert position as I endeavoured to maintain a constant self-questioning stance. Lather (1991:10) uses Derrida's concept of writing "under erasure" to address reflexivity. Engaging in the process of reflexivity means that one is contributing and deducting at the same time; it requires reviewing and revising until its substance is refined. Ballard (1996b:30) summarises the notion of reflexivity as follows:

> Critical self-reflection requires that we rigorously challenge our motivations, ideas, and assumptions from alternative perspectives. But it does not require the pretence that we believe in nothing, that our work is independent of values.

Reflexivity allowed for the process of inquiry to include the dialogue between the storytellers and me concerning the possible interpretations of experience. This process of questioning contributes to the validity of the research by showing that extrapolations are made on the grounds of reflexive, interpretative supposition rather than external facts (Winter 1996:18-20). In short, reflexivity is an attempt to monitor and reflect on one's doing of an inquiry and to account for one's constitutiveness (Hall 1996:30).

9.2.3 Accountability. An immediate problem inherent in an inquirer/participant relationship is that the inquirer is in a privileged position in terms of the inquiry, especially when we work with people from marginalised situations. An instinctive power differential is almost always present. Accountability structures help to minimise the unequal power distribution inherent in most inquiry situations by creating space for the participant where concerns can be voiced. Accountability structures privilege the voice of the inquiry participants. It also creates a space for the inquirer to deconstruct personal biases, assumptions and beliefs (Freedman & Combs 1996a:278-282; Tamasese & Waldegrave 1993:29-45).

Feminist inquirers take an active stance: is for accountability and against injustice and inequity. Checking and re-checking, voicing and re-voicing, hearing and re-hearing, ensuring and re-ensuring promote the practice of accountability by the inquirer (Elliot 1997:64).

D. CONCLUSION

At first glance the inquiry methodology and the epistemological/ontological underpinnings of this inquiry might appear unrelated, overlapping, or repetitive. It is only when the inquiry narrative's central theories are discussed that the unifying nature of the assertions of these theories become evident. At the outset of this inquiry I wanted both to find my own voice - which had gone into hiding - and to tell a story which would incorporate my own voice along with the voices of those represented by the writing. I hoped that the theorising would happen as part of the story. I still entertain the fervent wish that my personal narrative will in some way disrupt the master narrative surrounding migration. This master narrative speaks mostly of hardship, subjugation, power/knowledge, injustice and loneliness, but also incorporates those narratives of overcoming and survival – even during the times of hardship. In 'my narrative' I include the narratives of those I represent during this inquiry - not only those whose stories I tell, but also the stories of those who have remained silent and unvoiced.

> ***Reflection:*** I spent this last weekend in New York with a friend. We used Yellow Cabs on many occasions. Every cab driver was a foreigner. I asked my questions to elicit their stories of migration. Each story has tales of woe about loneliness, mal-treatments of various kinds, but also elements of personal overcoming …

As I conclude this chapter on the inquiry methodology used during this inquiry and prepare myself for the next chapter of in which I will discuss the stories of migration which are central to this inquiry- Michel Foucault's words seem particularly apposite:

> The problem is not one of hanging people's "consciousness" or what's in their heads; but the political, economic, institutional regime of the production of truth.
>
> (Foucault 1977a:14)

CHAPTER SIX

Conversations

"When another person makes you suffer,
it is because he suffers deeply within himself,
and his suffering is spilling over.
He does not need punishment;
he needs help.
That's the message he is sending."

Thich Nhat Hanh
(The Miracle of Mindfulness)

A. INTRODUCTION

As I read and reread, work and rework the interview snippets that form the greatest part of this chapter, I remain aware that, by telling stories and engaging with interviews, we are involving ourselves in political acts: "…interviewing is … inextricably and unavoidably historically, politically, and contextually bound" (Fontana & Frey 2005:695). How then do we go about it respectfully, especially when the interview process has been so frequently ridiculed by the mass media (Jerry Springer, for instance)? Does it require a return to a more dogmatic way of going about the interview? Fontana and Frey (2005:695) suggest a useful metaphor: "… why not turn it [the interview] into a walking stick to help some people get on their feet?" This metaphor sits well within my experiences of having been engaged with the interviews constitutive of this writing. The "getting on their feet" speaks to me of how the interviews have helped me get up onto my feet from my metaphoric sickbed of migrancy; how the other storytellers have recounted the ways in which telling their stories have helped them engage with issues they had forgotten; and how they had valued that recalling. Most importantly, the interviews are the walking stick this writing leans upon to support itself. It is not possible to create the collaborative effort of an interview on one's own. A conversational partner is necessary for an interview to take place. Having said this, I must immediately acknowledge that one is able to be "in interview" with one's self or the page or any other aspects one wants to add to this image. But this is not the intention of the statement. Arthur Frank (2005:966 - author's italics) speaks a question that has had me on edge since the first moment of contemplating this inquiry: "*What can one person say about another?*" It was important to me that each person spoke for themselves: we each represent ourselves by our words and our stories call forth other stories.

Although I did not inquire *why* the storytellers chose the stories they offered as their representations, I did need to select from their Story Guides fragments to use in this chapter. How did I go about this selection process? Where the Story Guide was completed via e-mail, I selected from each Story Guide those sections that specifically pertained to the question asked. The selection was made largely for the sake of brevity rather than because I favoured some information above other information. (The reader can refer to Appendix Three for a complete version of each of the Story Guides.) Kon presented me with his story in essay form. I extracted from his document what I could in as far as it bore relevance to the questions I had posed in the Story Guide.

Danielle, Gabriella and Gita were the first persons I had had a conversation with regarding migration. The academic term to describe this conversation would be that it was an "unstructured interview."

A more honest description of it would be that it was a free-flowing conversation where we all dipped in an out of the conversation at will thereby co-creating a polyphonic whole. Gabriella provided me with additional bits which helped to clarify her interview. Her additional Story Guide is also included in Appendix Three. Some would argue that our conversation speaks more of a postmodern interview process. My conversation partners helped me enormously to shape the subsequent, more specific questions I was going to ask. Our initial conversation, however, did not allow me to select story fragments to answer all the questions in the final version of the Story Guide, as we had not conversed in particular about those topics.

It is important, in my opinion, to remain aware that an interview and the 'encoding' and subsequent 'decoding' of an interview is populated with a residue of ambiguity. The hows of persons' lives cannot be encapsulated simply by speaking the conversation, by listening to the conversation and then by stepping away from the conversation with the assumption that one has all the relevant knowledge at hand to enable you to extract the ultimate 'Truth' about that person's life by means of your encoding, decoding, deconstructing and reconstructing processes. Similarly, one must be alert to the trap of gendered interviews (Fontana & Frey 2005:710–712). As I am "in interview" with their writing and with myself as a self(?)-proclaimed feminist writer, I will have to acknowledge that I neglected to take into consideration the possibility of the gendered potentials within the questions I posed. Fortunately I have been largely spared the iniquities of "committing" such interviews by the gods of interviewing. It is, though, not a notion that I will remain unaware of in future (Peräkylä 2005:869-886).

After compiling the initial collation of all the stories, I forwarded the Collated Story Guide to all the storytellers, asking them to check whether I had represented them fairly. I asked them to add in italics what they wanted to add to their stories and to put in brackets what they wanted removed from their stories prior to publication. I also informed them that they could now complete the questions they had initially chosen to leave blank, if they so desired. Once I had received all the responses back, I added these responses to Appendix Three. I felt comfortable doing so as they had all given me permission to include their Story Guides, as is, in the eventual published version of this writing.

When I had initially planned this chapter I thought that it would be an exciting and 'easy' chapter to do. I thought that all it would require was for me to read whether the storytellers agreed with my own experiences or not, to engage with their stories and then to reflect on our stories as a whole. It was indeed an easy and exciting chapter as far as the reading of the stories was concerned. But I found myself profoundly stuck when it came to reflecting on the stories. I was overwhelmed by how multi-layered and polyvocal each story was. I was overwhelmed by how I was unable to make all-encompassing, readily accessible statements about the experiences of others. I found myself being caught in a spiral of "*if this then that and possibly something else*" without a clear map of where I was going. I found this very, very difficult to navigate. Once again I found myself often staring - at the computer screen or at the ceiling or at the now flowing Oyster River - and begging for answers to my dilemma. The answer(s) kept on evading me, even though I had a sense that they were lurking on the periphery of my mind. I started paging through the piles and piles of books and articles that filled every possible space in my room and in my computer's database, looking for this almost-there answer.

I was sure I had read the answer somewhere and that I only needed to find it and all will be solved. I needed the key to the locked door. I paged and paged. I did not find the answer in my paging. By now I was weeping tears of pure and unadulterated frustration. I leant back on my haunches, held my head in my hands and quite unashamedly sobbed out loud. I remember shaking my head, saying to myself: "Grow up, woman, this is stupid." I grew up [*sic*]: I went to lie on my bed and stared into

space. Then, like a whisper in a thunderstorm, I realised: "This is why I am telling the *stories*!" I am not finding the answers in my library of now scattered books and articles because no one has told the ultimate version of the *stories*. The *stories* need telling because every story is different even though they have some overlaps. The answers are in the *stories*. This is why I am doing this work. I am telling the *stories*. The *stories* are important. In the relational telling of our worlds we construct ourselves and we change and develop and envelop, as the generative possibilities present themselves. We construct and we co-construct, as the confluence of life happens around us - as relational being surrounds us. It is in *this* that we will find the possibilities that set us free. There is no one explanation or answer – it is in the co-creation; in the relational that the knowing emerges. This is the 'answer' for which I have been looking !

So many of the stories include war and destruction. I wondered about that, as well. Had I managed to 'choose' storytellers who shared many of the same experiences? I know I had not. The tellings had happened spontaneously and the tellers had largely 'self(?)'-selected to tell their stories without any previous pre-selection criteria they had to adhere to. Many of the stories tell of hardship and conflict. When a story is told, though, it is not forgotten. The story is the memory of what was and the hope of what we can become. Maybe Thich Nhat Hanh's explanation about conflict and suffering offers one possibility of this often- found topic in our stories:

> When you say something really unkind, when you do something in retaliation, your anger increases. You make the other person suffer, and he will try hard to say or to do something back to get relief from his suffering. That is how conflict escalates.
>
> Thich Nhat Hanh (2001:43)

Jacques Derrida published *Glas* in 1974. This work consisted of two continuous columns of print. Both these columns begin in mid-sentence and go on for almost 300 pages, with occasional indented passages like remarks and occasional slabs of quotation. The left-hand column, with slightly larger print and closer-set lines, consists of a highly original reading and interweaving of quotes from the 19th century philosopher, Hegel. The other column is a commentary, also with extensive quotations, on the works of the French lyrical pederast writer and jailbird, Jean Genet (Strathern 2003:34).

I borrow from Derrida to assist me with the formatting of this section describing my conversations with the storytellers. I use journalistic freedom to inscribe my columns as I wish. As said before, the left-hand column reflects our entire story as we told it whilst completing the Story Guide. The right-hand column contains reflections on all the stories – my story and those of the storytellers. By juxtaposing these two literary forms in this way (the *verbatim* use of our stories and my reflections upon the stories), I wish to reveal some of the multi-layeredness and richness of our narratives. In using the direct transcriptions of our tellings, our voices will have the loudest reverberation and subsequent authenticity.

B. COLLATED CONVERSATIONS

STORY GUIDE
Guiding Questions About Your Experience of Migration

A. MIGRATION

(*A migrant is seen as someone who stays outside of their usual country of residence for at least one year.***)**

M1. How would you describe your overall experience of migration? Could you please tell me a story that would an illustration of your experience?

Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: S**t. In Taiwan I was sick all the time…. I could not get hold of them [my children]…. In the UK, my overriding story is about continuously being told how I am not good enough…. I know that there are a myriad of good things that happened for me/us in the UK… ***Danielle:*** I felt just as much an outsider there as anywhere else. I came from a different culture. I wasn't born there. English was not my first language. And there is mourning. And there is a grieving. It's part of who you are. ….Even though I was only three years old, you'd think, but no, I grieve, I mean I grew up here and saw what life is like. So I still grieve for that. ***Gabriella:*** I actually had an experience at the American border. They asked for passport and they said "citizenship?", and I said Canadian. And the American officer said "a born Canadian or just another kind?" And I said "the other kind." He asked that, and he said pull over. He just checked, but that's that. ***Coenie:***It was very nice. Good. ***Alina:***It's difficult to tell. ***Heike:*** "…but I could not understand a word of it –I realised later on that he was speaking with a strong Scottish accent, which is why I could not make out what he said. I also remember trying to find some work to tie me over and being very surprised by the fact that pubs would not employ me as a barmaid due to "insufficient experience." ***Kon:*** However, things have dramatically changed from early 90s, as waves of war affected displaced southern Sudanese migrated to Egypt to escape atrocities of civil	***Reflections:*** I stated previously that one of the reasons why I was embarking on this particular way of going about looking into the topic of migration was to help me find hSealing for the hurts I had experienced during my time as a migrant. The stories in the next door column tell of each person's particular difficulties during their time of migration and initial integration. Coenie and Phenyo tell of how the experience was a good experience for them. I expected Heike to tell a story about how good it was for her. I know Heike to be a person who always laughs and smiles and who could be described as being thoroughly kind. She has this as her preferred way of being. In my last job, Heike was the one who supported me, took me out to lunch and dinner, who emailed me and me asked how I was, and took time to come to my office to ask after my well-being. I realise now that her caring must have been informed by her experiences as a migrant. I did not even consider this latter notion during the times she was there for me when things were particularly difficult. As I reflect now on the stories told above, I wonder whether Harré and Van Langenhove's (1999:14-31) notion of positioning could be used to understand how migrants experience their migratory experience? According to Harré and Van Langenhove's (1999:14-31), we position ourselves in terms of others and others, in turn, position themselves according to how we position ourselves. The positioning processes allow for certain performances to be enacted in ways that may be useful or not so useful to the parties involved. I reflect on how JB, BK & NS, in particular, played this 'positioning

war between the Muslim North and Christian South in Sudan. ….It is a conflict attributed to socio cultural, economic, and political and national identity in Sudan. ***Stella: …***migration was for me both exciting and inevitable….I had a strong desire to continue my university studies….I also had a strong desire to meet foreigners; I used to be curious about diversity….saw migration as a long trip, an adventure, an opportunity….my exploration of a very different culture.…Migration was felt as an opportunity….migration also meant for me a longing for my own culture, family, and home….felt alienated being a migrant as my old sense of identity had to be more and more compromised in the process of assimilating practices and ideologies different from the ones I grew up with….I had to explain about my culture to others in order to feel understood and belonged instead of me being my culture spontaneously, effortlessly, and aimlessly. ***Penny:*** Traumatic, as I child I originally viewed this as an adventure but once the holiday was over and we had to settle into schools, home etc it all seemed very foreign and not understanding Afrikaans and living in a Platteland (rural) town was difficult as we were treated as foreigners and we were victimised by the Afrikaans children on the bus to school every day. ***Phenyo:*** I would say positive. It has been the single most important thing in my life, given me the perspective that I have and share today. I got to meet a range of people who I credit with playing a major role in shaping my thinking of life and the dynamics there within. ***Jesse:*** My experience, there is a lot of good things… and a lot of bad things. The positive thing is….I learned how to talk to different people. And, I am comfortable being some place that I have no idea where or who anyone is….So for a long time I was like, I would turn into a loner…I never connected with them…. You start believing what people say because you are different. I really didn't make it at first….it's hard for me to stay in contact with people that are close to me… ***Kate:*** Trying really hard to integrate into the other culture so that I didn't stand out…we were quickly recognised as the English kids….I did not like being different.	game' with me to the point where I often asked questions about my own way of being in the world (see Chapter Five above). Davies and Harré (1991:43-63) describe the implications that such positioning games might effect.
M2. What <u>pulled</u> you towards migrating (made you consider migration as an option)?	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: Two things, really….we were going to buy a yacht and sail the seas…. he had been replaced by an Affirmative Action person. ***Danielle:*** It is difficult to tell, because I was three years old. And I have no memories in fact before the age of eight… A very bad process. It wasn't our choice to	***Reflection*** From the stories beside, it would seem as if some form of hardship (except for Phenyo and Kate) motivated all the storytellers to move from their countries of origin to their destination countries. Both these possibilities are consistent with what it is that the literature says about the pull factors

immigrate. ***Gabriella:*** I think in my story what also helped me to become Canadian, is that my father is a self-made man, who is very successful in a small town where he lives… ***Coenie:***I already know what pushed me. The fact that by then I haven't been trying very hard, that I hadn't got a nice job in South Africa, and that I didn't get job satisfaction. And I was still living with my parents. I wanted to get out. I wanted to have some freedom. I like adventure. I felt the need for a challenge. ***Alina:***Material and personal problems. ***Heike:*** Germany and German life style made me feel very constricted and constrained –it felt there was a huge expectation on me to work for some years, than give up work and have a family –it was not what I wanted and when I went to England before, it felt to me that there were more options and opportunities available to me. ***Kon:*** In 1988 I have received a notice of acceptance to attend a 2 years community college at the Zagazig Institute of Commerce in Egypt…. In 1990 the outcome of my second application for the Egyptian Scholarship was announced, and I was accepted in the Faculty of Arts, Department of Sociology at Alexandria University. ***Stella:*** Migration was necessary for me as I wanted to continue my University studies. It was my chance to fulfil my dream. I was also pulled towards migrating with the idea that I would be independent from my family….It gave me a sense of empowerment….migrating to a more developed cultural city than my own hometown was seen as an exciting opportunity… ***Penny:*** Due to Independence in Zimbabwe after a war in which both my father and brother fought, my parents did not feel we had a future in the country. SA was the logical choice as we had family here. ***Phenyo:*** A desire to learn and grow in my interactions with others from a varied background. ***Jesse: ….***circumstances in the country with war and stuff like that….my parents, different things that they probably don't want me to talk about….I think that is when I decided just to stay for a little while….We came here almost as refugees, but political asylum. We were not treated well when we came to the USA because it was different….I have no idea why we chose the USA. It is probably because in Africa everyone thinks America is amazing. ***Kate:*** My father always says that it was the land of possibilities…I can't remember what I anticipated before going.	involved in migration. I had held an opinion that the age at which one migrates makes it easier to settle in one's destination country. The above would not support that idea I had held. Danielle, for instance, was three years old when she migrated and she still often finds aspects linked to the process difficult. I was 44 years old when we migrated and I found the process difficult. The other storytellers vary in their ages at their time of migration. Cohen (2010) speaks of the effects of migration on second generation migrants – how some children of migrants want to break with the 'old ways' completely, whilst some children of migrants want to adopt and adhere to the 'old ways' in a more stringent way than their parents had ever practiced their cultural heritage. In these instances, age would similarly not play a role. It would possibly be a useful future area of inquiry to consider how one's age at the time of one's migration contributed to one's experience of migration. My literature searches did not show up any such inquiry that I could find.

M3. What <u>pushed</u> you (eventually made you go) to migrate?	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: When T was replaced at his job, there was no way in which we could maintain our standard of living…. we had this dream of sailing the seas… was offered a job in the UK… ***Danielle:*** It wasn't our choice to immigrate. ***Gabriella:*** I think in my story what also helped me to become Canadian, is that my father is a self-made man, who is very successful in a small town where he lives….I think in my story I had to move far away….the Hungarian culture is very negative. ***Coenie:***I am not a person for routine work every day ….I just felt the need for something new. ***Alina:***My friend's examples. ***Heike:*** There were not enough nursing jobs in Germany and I saw work colleagues becoming very burned out from staying in a job they had done for over 20 years in the same place –I did not want to end up like this. ***Kon:*** My parents have advised me not to come back to Sudan as well, as they had a perception that the Islamic government in Sudan is targeting young educated Christians….The Egyptian Government treats Sudanese migrants as displaced people ….Southern Sudanese University students that were in scholarship in Egypt….were in dilemma what should happen after graduation as it was not possible to go back to Sudan, as we see all our country men and women are leaving country in huge numbers to permanently live in Egypt. ***Stella:*** For my first migration, it was my passion to pursue my studies to a discipline I really liked….I felt more pushed to migrate again, at this time to England,…I felt quite strange in my own country because I also found it difficult to assimilate again into my own culture. My second migration was necessary to find work….My second migration is felt more as a push than pull. ***Penny:*** The war and subsequent change of government. ***Phenyo:*** My studies. ***Jesse:*** We need to know that we are safe. I went to Uganda. My parents were still in Rwanda trying to work things out. Yes, I was either going to go to South Africa. ***Kate:*** My father joined an American company in the UK and I suppose he asked to be sent to the States. We actually migrated. It was not an international assignment. We had no annual home-leave. In fact when he was posted to Switzerland 18 months later, his contract included annual home-leave to the States.	***Reflections:*** The stories on the side tell of how the storytellers migrated from their countries of origin to their destination countries to seek better opportunities for themselves. Danielle, Penny, Jesse and Kon tell stories of safety-seeking from war- and genocide-torn situations. Their situations would coincide with what literature refers to as 'forced migration'. During my reading of their stories, and listening to the telling of their stories (I had had conversations with all of them regarding their experiences either before or after their conversations recorded in this work), I became aware that I was experiencing a sense of being a spoilt brat and moaning with a loaf of white bread under my arm. In Afrikaans, we have an expression: "*Kla met die witbrood onder jou arm*," which directly translates into "moaning with a loaf of white bread under your arm" and means that one is whinging about something that you really have no reason to whinge about. I/we had not experienced war or overt violence or threats of such proportions to our lives when we left South Africa. We had lived in what may be described as a violent and unsafe society, but we had not experienced open warfare or personal hostility that caused us to daily and overtly fear for our lives. I tell a personal story quite contrary to fear. During my time as a community worker in some of the poorest suburbs of Cape Town, I *never* felt at all at risk, even though I was working under extremely dangerous situations. Furthermore, we had set off on our migratory experience under almost perfect circumstances. We had enough money to go to England, I had a good job to go to, we could afford to rent a car in England until we bought our own, we went to live in a house that was furnished and which my new employers had stocked with groceries – everything was perfect. So why was I complaining? Why, still, this overt sense of hurt and degradation when I think of my migratory experiences? Could the (financial) exploitation by my Taiwanese employers have played a contributing role in this matter, or is it a case of selective memorying? Could how one selects and/or deselects the memories contributing to one's experiences be another future topic of inquiry? Taylor (2010) would quite possibly agree that it would.

M4. Why did you decide on the country you eventually migrated to? Was this country what you expected? How so?	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: We did not really decide on a country. It so happened that the country was decided for us. In both instances. Taiwan was not at all what we expected… I thought that, prior to leaving SA for the UK, that I ***knew*** the UK…. I was shocked by how things were, on the surface, the same as they were in most other countries. ***Danielle:*** I'm a citizen of Canada because that is the nationality that I hold. My passport is Canadian. And if I were to go outside of Canada, I would probably say I'm Canadian. But within Canada it is a different issue. ***Gabriella:*** you asked me what I am, and I said Canadian. The more I think what it is, the more I think I am an Ottawan. And I can tell you why. It is interesting that in Canada people don't really see the Canadian culture, because everybody is from everywhere. But there is a distinctive Canadian culture that I believe in. ***Coenie:***It was the first offer I got to go to another country….There are people who leave Taiwan on the first day. There are people that get depressed. There are people that literally go crazy there. He convinced me to move by telling me that it is a cute place to live; that the people there are cute….So, really, there were not many things that attracted me to the country. ***Alina:***People who has already came out and who has promised to help me. ***Heike:*** I always wanted to be able to speak fluent English….It was very hard for me to find my feet…. It felt an extremely lonely place and things only improved once I got a job as a healthcare assistant in Leatherhead… ***Kon:*** I then applied to Canadian Embassy which was accepting immigrants by then from Sudan to come to Canada as conventional refugees. My writing activities in social justice…has facilitated approval of my application to come to Canada as a Landed Immigrant in 1996. Landed Immigrant was my new construction of identity that I have acquired for 3 years before becoming a Naturalized Canadian Citizen in 2001 in Canada. ***Stella:*** I first migrated to Boston…. diverse with so many different minorities and spoken languages….Then I moved to England, at this time not as a university student but as an employee, and so my migration has been felt more as mundane and less exciting. ***Penny:*** Due to family living in SA my parents felt there would be more support. No – the country was not what I expected. I always had a holiday maker's view and reality was very different. From soft issues like television and food. To language, culture	*Reflections:* It would seem as if only Phenyo had actively pre-decided to which country he wanted to migrate. Even though he had made a decision about where, specifically, he wanted to go, he, nevertheless, reports that it was initially hard to be there. When he arrived in London, he went live with friends we share and had both known for a long time. These friends represent welcoming, loving and hospitality in a way that remains an example. Yet … Phenyo still found it hard in some ways to be in London. Kate's mother stated that the English and the Americans are divided by a common language. Stella reports about being enthralled by the possibilities available in America. Various storytellers, various versions of the same story, with Stella being the only one, really, offering a story of less struggling when initially arriving in the USA. It is only later that stories of struggles make their way into her telling. What will the theorists make of the possibilities offered above? Will they speak of how change is dislocating because it is change, in the same tautological way that an accident is an accident because it is an accident? It reminds me of the Holmes and Rahe (1967) Stress Scale (SRRS), which includes the notion that even preferred changes can be experienced as stressful. Does preferred migration in some way relate to Hans Selye's (1907-1982) model of eustress or 'good' stress? I <u>so</u> dearly wanted to come to New Hampshire to work with Sheila on my Ph.D. Tielman and I had had three weeks of a wonderful holiday before my time of studying began. I <u>*wanted*</u> to be here in every possible way. Yet, the first two weeks or so of being in New Hampshire, without my husband, not knowing how the university system worked, not knowing where or how I would do the most mundane things, but finding out as I went along, contributed to me experiencing such profound homesickness and heartache it actually affected my physical health. I slowly became integrated into Durham-life. Now I cannot see myself being anywhere else except in Durham, with the students, in the Library (ahhhh, the Library!!!), next to the Oyster River …. Could this be an analogy of what happens when one migrates? The push-me, pull-me of wanting and hating at the same time? Bűrgelt, Morgan and Pernice, (2011: 707-730) endorse how adaptation may result in psychological distress adversely affecting the emotional well-being of a migrant. They describe how the meanings the

and not having a sense of home and belonging. ***Phenyo:*** It was the country I had originally had in mind, I had previously written a study option to the UK office owing to my goal to pursue Actuarial Science. The UK was everything I expected and more, the initial few months were by no means easy but one learns and adapts. The varied people, varied perspectives and a city that was not so preoccupied with race as what South Africa and is still is to a great extent. ***Jesse:*** The opportunity came for us. We found a church that helped us get here, and we stayed with them too. I think that played a big role….The life we had to live here was thirty times worse than the one we had to live in Africa…. We had to live in homeless shelters. Life was a struggle for the last ten years or seven years…. they helped us for a few months. For almost a year actually, because then we got paper work. That is when we moved into the homeless shelter…. It wasn't good. People who lived around us there were still backwards, negative people. It was a learning experience. ***Kate:*** My mother said that she didn't expect the cultural divide to be so great. She would quote the saying, "The English and the Americans are divided by a common language." She was also hesitant, she told us later, to go to a country where the Catholic US President, J.F. Kennedy, was assassinated.	migrants ascribe to their experiences can lead to well-being and growth depending on their interactions with the environment and their personal and psychological abilities to engage with their environment in a preferred way.
M5. What were your hopes and dreams and desires for your migratory experience? Do you think you contributed to the country you migrated to and is your contribution in line with your hopes and dreams and desires about migrating?	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: Everything happened so fast in both instances, which lead us to not, I don't think, ever stop to think about any hopes, dreams or desires other than to make enough money to survive. ***Danielle:*** When I came to Canada? It is difficult to tell, because I was three years old. And I have no memories in fact before the age of eight. ***Gabriella:*** But if I think of in Hungary I would see that diverse people would never work together. They never could have survived together. But in Canada they can. And sometimes I think that people who live fairly, not as aggressive as Americans, like tolerant and not as aggressive, end up in Canada. So I think certain type of people feel comfortable here. They came from many places, but there is something similar in their mentality somehow. ***Coenie:***I like adventure. I thought about it a bit, like, if I would have gone to Europe, or if I had had a chance to go to London or to America, it would have been nice, but it feels to me that there is not much adventure in doing that….I felt the need for a	*Reflections:* The story segments alongside speak of hoping for better things being one of the main reasons why one migrates to a different country. I am not sure that one ever takes the time to stop and ask the question about what one is contributing to the country. I can recall, however, how I was accepted by the University of Bristol to do my Ph.D. in Narrative Therapy with Jane Speedy. During 2004, when I applied to be accepted onto the program, the cost of the program for foreigner (which I still was at that stage), was £24.000.00. British citizens paid £2600 for the same program and refugees and asylum seekers could enrol onto the program for free. At that stage, I recall making the statement about how I found this dreadfully unfair, as I was daily contributing to the well-being of British citizens, with my work as a psychologist, and was paying heavily towards Social Security and Income Tax. All migration literature consistently reflects how elective (unforced) migrants move to destination countries with the hope of something better than what

challenge. The food must smell and taste different. The people have to be different. The religion must be totally different. So I felt like experiencing new things. ***Alina:***The personal and material problems were solved, but re-appeared in troubles with work. ***Heike:*** I wanted to be free to make my own choices in terms of my life and career. England has certainly given me this opportunity and I have no regrets at all…. I am thankful for every experience this country has given me… ***Kon:*** Having been working with the City of Ottawa, Employment and Financial Assistance Department for few years, I didn't consider studying in Canada as important as I first thought. ***Stella:*** My dream was to complete my studies and feel satisfied with my acquired knowledge….being away from home, having to overcome all kinds of difficulties on our own, and having dreams, goals, struggles, and hopes in a foreign country. ***Penny:*** Being a child, all I really wanted was to feel accepted and safe. As an adult, this is now home – it took approximately 20 years to get to this point though. I feel I have contributed as I have created employment for over 55 people in my time here. I guess it is in line with my hopes and dreams as I love South Africa and it is now home. ***Phenyo:*** My primary reason for travelling through to the UK was to further my studies in actuarial science and gain international experience in the area of my pursuit. My secondary reasons….I really felt the need to get away from that which was around me….I would like to think that in some way I contributed [to] the country….I exceeded the initially planned contributions. I am still at an early phase in my career, perhaps in a later phase I will have designed solutions which will have noted potential to contribute to the UK. ***Jesse:*** I don't know. I was just so excited….Definitely that was a big part of it, so we could be together and have no fear of anything…. And then they adopted another child here. And then we have two other kids. My mother adopted two foster kids…. That is how I grew up. My parents love helping people….My dad has a non-profit organization here. He works with all the refugees in New Hampshire….So my parents started this non-profit in order to help those people who are going to be coming, those people who are here….For me right now, it is just finding my own identity and helping others that are struggling like we struggled. ***Kate:*** Like I said, I can't remember what I anticipated about moving to the States. When we moved to Switzerland, I hoped to meet Heidi. My grandmother had given	they had in their countries of origin. Ali (2011:479-500) tells of how migrants not only bring attributes to their destination culture, but that they, in addition, contribute different aspects to their countries of origin - those countries they 'inhabit from afar', such as remittances, hopes for others of also migrating, marriage, media, social networks, etc. The stories the migrants tell and the examples they provide have a bearing on how those that do not migrate are seen *versus* those that do migrate. Ali draws attention to the questions about why so few studies have inquired into *why* people migrate in the first place, *how* migration affects the ways people at home interact with each other after someone has migrated away from their community and about how someone's status changes when migration happens or doesn't happen. In many countries, being a migrant is a high-status position. Potential migrants learn why going abroad is desirable before they actually go.

me the book in 1967 before she knew we were moving to Switzerland. Heidi was my heroine. I was so disappointed when we landed on February 2, 1967, not to see the mountains and Heidi.	
M6. What was going on in your life when you left your country of origin? What were some of the things you preferred for your life and what were some of the things you would have preferred to *not* have been going on in your life before you left?	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: Not preferred***:*** When we left SA, Tielman had been replaced by an AA person…. both the kids were out of the house. Preferred: we lived a very good life. We had an awesomely beautiful home where we could hear the dolphins and whales talk, see them from our deck and watch them at play. We had lived the high life… ***Danielle:*** A very bad process. It wasn't our choice to immigrate. It's was a choice to come to Canada, as it was to Europe. But it ended up being a very difficult one. So a number of different experiences that was very hard….And it didn't start turning around until I was about seven years old….I had to reconstruct the memories, because there were none…. ***Gabriella:*** But there is a distinctive Canadian culture that I believe in. It's that everybody is from everywhere. People have totally different views. Yet they function together somehow fairly well. Which is amazing. ***Coenie:*** I am not a person for routine work every day, so it was a time when I woke up every day and did the same thing….Actually, I didn't have any freedom. I did not even have satisfaction from my work. And it was the same thing over and over… ***Alina:***I had an interesting job, but the salary was not enough for decent life. ***Heike:*** I was the only person, who wanted to go to work in care ever in my whole family and I recall having many a battle with my parents about this…. I felt very upset as I knew in my heart that staying in Germany was the wrong thing to do….I had very dysfunctional relationships with men in Germany and I think that was also part of the reason for me to leave …. ***Kon:*** …I have found myself as a displaced person as people who just arrived from Sudan, and lost all entitlement to both Egyptian and Sudanese Scholarship. I have then completed my application to the UNHCR to seek refuge in Egypt; however, the United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees has rejected my application due to reasons that brought me to Egypt as student regardless of war in my homeland (Sudan). ***Penny:*** I was leading a relatively happy carefree childhood in Zim and the only issue was really the war and the threat to my family and my father and brother fighting in	***Reflections:*** The story fragments beside tell of how multi-layered the lives of people are. Both preferred and not-preferred incidents happen in people's lives. Some would drive us towards migrating, and some would have us remain within the situations as they present themselves. Whilst reading the fragments pertaining to this section, I wondered what it was that contributed to one's going or staying. Would it be the idea of personal resilience that allows one to move or to stay? Is it about opportunities or about the creating of opportunities for going? I cannot get away from the beggars who are such a prevalent sight in South Africa at this time. If they had options, would they still be there? Does doing the begging day after day not speak of a majestic kind of resilience? At this juncture, I have to reflect on the word/term beggar. The word beggar, for me, holds a derogatory connotation. I look to the thesaurus for a better option. The thesaurus offers options like scrounger, indigent, down-and-out, vagabond, vagrant, tramp, bum, drifter, hobo, homeless person, street dweller. All these phrases hold a rather demeaning quality. These nouns have a totalising nature about them, which does not satisfy. All these words possibly hold and element of that which is relevant, but they do not comprise the totality of Truth. I wonder about what these people would call themselves? Is there not more of a sense of persons whom have fallen upon hard times to what the persons we are attempting to describe present? I cannot imagine that someone would choose to put him-/herself through the degradation that these people daily have to endure if they had any other options. But, I acknowledge, the latter is my story and not their story. If I chose to speak about a hardtimes person, would that word eventually gain an equally derogatory status if that term was to be absorbed into common usage? Freedman and Combs (1996:1) reminds us: "Using the narrative metaphor leads us to think about people's lives as stories and to work with them to experience their life stories in ways that are meaningful and fulfilling. Using the metaphor of Social Construction leads us to consider

the war. ***Phenyo:*** I cannot say that there were notable things happening in my life at the time. ***Jesse:*** There were a lot of worries about my parents, because I didn't know the situation that they were in. We lived with a few other kids, my cousins, not all of them were my cousins, but their parents were going through the same situation. We both didn't know how it was going to turn out. ***Kate:*** I could only understand what I didn't like about England after I left. In England I was bullied by bigger children. Bullying is so much part of the culture, it starts in primary school. In the States, I could run away from any form of bullying as soon as it started. I had friends who didn't bully me.	the ways in which every person's social, interpersonal reality has been constructed through interaction with other human beings and human institutions and to focus on the influence of social realities in the meaning of people's lives." What we call the people we speak with, speak about or write about, is thus important.
M7. Would you go through the migratory process again? Why/why not? Who encouraged you to go?	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: I suppose if circumstances were different, we would never have migrated. ***Danielle:….*** I guess because I have been here since I was a baby, to me those things are second nature to me now. It's part and parcel of who I am. I have integrated that culture from the very beginning… ***Gabriella:*** So I think in my story I had to move far away. My father's hand could not reach extremely as much, and I could become my own. ***Coenie:***Yes, if there would be the same kind of push actions, I would probably do the same thing. If I am still here in a year's time and I still don't have a nice job, or I am still here in this same boat, then I will spread my wings again, and go to another overseas country… ***Alina:***I had a successful personal life there. ***Heike:*** I would go again –I have no regrets and I feel that because I followed my dream, I am a happier and stronger person. No one encouraged me to go, so I think that also made me stronger inside as I did follow my own dreams and made my own choices. ***Stella:*** …My relatives, who lived in the US, helped me. They even called the ambassador to grant me with the visa and thankfully he did. My relatives persuaded my parents for me to come to the US and I also felt very encouraged by my relatives. I wouldn't prefer to go through the migratory process again. It was a difficult process. ***Penny:*** I would if I felt I did not have any choice. Leaving a country and even a city where you feel you belong is very traumatic and it took me a very long time to settle	*Reflections:* It is interesting that these story sections all speak of a big possibility towards rather remaining in one's country of origin rather than having to go through the hardships of migration. Gabriella says that she chose to migrate to escape her father's sphere of influence. Would she have chosen to live so far away from her family if her situation was different for her? I cannot recall any of the literature I had consulted for the purposes of this writing reflecting on the idea of going, whilst rather wanting to stay, except where the topic of forced migration was under discussion. As I reflect on this aspect of the questions asked, I wonder what had specifically impelled me to ask this question. I have to conclude that it was quite possibly the not-knowing whether I would actually have left for greener pastures had we had other options available to us that prompted me to inquire into this aspect. I conclude that, as with most other matters in life, we were also faced with the both/and rather than the either/or when faced with the possibility of migration when one is fortunate enough to be an elective migrant. Yet, forced migrants would possibly also prefer to have remained in their countries of origin under better circumstances, preferring to elect at some other stage whether they wanted to migrate or not. The latter opens up the idea about life choices and the discourses surrounding the notion of choice. I, furthermore, imagine that both forced and unforced migration includes the telling of stories and the meaning we make of these stories we tell. It has becomes an area of interest to me to consider how our choices could

in SA. My parents relocated us. ***Jesse:*** I can't talk about most of it, but the one I can talk about is that just not knowing if my parents were going to be okay, and if we were ever going to see them and stuff like that. That was the hard part. But, for being okay, we knew we were relatively safe. In some situations, people would just drive by on motorcycles and we were like, okay, this is our time to die. ***Kate:***I wouldn't want to go through the migratory process with my own children. In fact, I decided to stay put in Geneva because I didn't want my children to have to go through the process of adapting in the way I had to. I wanted to give them roots in Switzerland, so we became Swiss.	perchance become non-choices if we should go about our possibilities with an air of curiosity regarding the stories informing our options under consideration?
M8. What did you find difficult and/or easy about the process of migration?	**What would you do differently if you were to redo the process again?**
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: b…ut it all happened so fast and I was so 'wanted' job-wise where we migrated to, that the process in itself was not at all difficult. Taiwan: I would have done more research about the culture we were stepping into. UK: ...I would go to the UK again and probably will go back….make sure that Tielman had a preferred job, too, before we left. ***Danielle:*** I was thinking that my mother would tell a different story, and I think that my sister would tell a different story. ***Gabriella:*** So I didn't find it hard even though I started working for somebody and being her maid for two years, and cleaning her house for two years with an engineering degree in my pocket, because I felt this is just like adventure, this is so cool, this is so different. Later on I had this feeling that we are high and far away. ***Coenie:***It was a major culture shock,…I also had not done much research about the country….But, things like that and other things too, are much more difficult if you don't have a degree. I felt sorry for my friends who didn't have degrees. ***Alina:***I feel professionally unclaimed, I would not lose time and would [want] to study here. ***Heike:*** I can't really say, as most people would say, it was crazy to just go without having job, place to live, etc. I don't regret it as this experience was of great value to me. It probably would be better to have a bit more of an idea where to stay, where to work, etc. ***Kon:*** The last statement on the letter clearly indicated its limitation for an open competition in the Canadian Job Market with those who have completed their degrees in Canadian Institutions. Should I known that beforehand, I would have	***Reflections:*** The stories on the side speak both of loneliness and struggle and also of the excitement of new things and other opportunities. Although some aspects of the migratory process might be difficult, no one speaks of situations being so terrible that they were forced to abandon their 'new' (destination) countries to go somewhere else or even to return to their countries of origin. Jesse and Kon tell of living in more than one country due to war and genocide in their countries of origin. Yet, they are now settled in America and Canada, respectively, and would possibly like to go back to their countries of origin to visit and maybe retire, but they have absorbed the difficulties of their final destination countries and are planning on remaining there for the near future. Svašek (2011:89-106) speaks of the emotional dimensions of human mobility and transnational family life. According to her, feelings of non-belonging are part and parcel of human nature and thus not restricted to migrants, although experiences of loss and homelessness can be exacerbated by migrant-specific predicaments. I will quite possibly return to England, but work within another job market where the same derogatory experiences are not part of my daily reality. I am aware that I might, again, be open to re-entry shock (Cohen 2010:23) as I was when I returned to South Africa one year ago. I imagine we tell ourselves preferred stories about where we are going to help us make sense of the changes we are about to undergo. I know that if I were to return to England, I would seek a conversational partner to help me speak about the re-entry shock experience. If I had possibly sought a mindful supervisor when I had first settled in

started career changes focus, or trainings at early stage of my arrival to Canada, or at least upgrade my degree. ***Stella:*** My first migration was somewhat smooth because I had some support from my relatives….however, it was also very difficult….So, I had feelings of guilt for my family and also a sense of high responsibility to overcome all kinds of personal hurdles on my own at that time. My nose often bled from stress and lack of sleep….At that time, I thought that the whole experience was a miracle to have on my hands. My second migration has been a lot easier. I came to England already having a job and not as many responsibilities as I used to. ***Penny:*** I would make sure that the country/city/town I relocated to meets the needs of myself and my children from a lifestyle, cultural, social, economic and climatic perspective – not an easy call! ***Phenyo:*** I think the most pressing aspect of the migration process, is the admin that comes along with it. There is nothing specific that which I would do differently. ***Jesse:*** …it is a rich experience with meeting people that are so different from you, and different lifestyles, that are struggling. You see happiness with people that you would not expect to have that joy and happiness….My faith pushes me to be in an uncomfortable place in order to make a connection with other people. ***Kate:***There are two options available in my situation: 1. To work for a company or organization that would send me on an international assignment. And they would handle everything from work permit to paying for my house, and so on… 2. To decide to move to another country, perhaps in a warmer climate, and continue to do the same kind of work that I am currently doing but reduce my workload because my costs would be reduced. I can imagine having two homes, one in another country like Greece and one in Switzerland. Is this migration?	England, my experiences might have had, upon reflection, a quite different hue to me. I would most definitely do the seeking of a conversational partner differently next time. But, what about those migrants that do not have the luxury of accessing a conversational partner? Is this where the local authorities in the different countries could step in to set up amenities for migrants?
M9. What do you think the pros and cons of migration is in general? Would you encourage others to migrate?	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: ….the cons are about leaving a culture one knows, leaving the things you call your own and leaving your family…. The pros are about seeing new things and new opportunities; of venturing into the unknown and making it work – not falling into the victim-role. ***Danielle:*** When I did my MBA, the group of people that I have associated with were all from different nationalities. We all had something in common, even those who	*Reflections:* From the sections alongside, it would seem as if there are both pros and cons to migrating, especially for Jesse who was forced to migrate on so many occasions. Stella speaks of people in Greece who would not migrate because they think they might be lonely if they migrated. Literature speaks of people who are at their happiest when they are on the move, whilst others find it incomprehensible to consider leaving their place of origin. I find myself

were born in Canada. There was one guy who was born in Canada, but with Italian origin. So there were some cultural differences, or something that made us all understand that there was a different experience. ***Gabriella:*** I had the drive to accomplish something on my own, because I never got the recognition. No matter what I did, and how I did it, I never got the recognition. So, I had this drive, and I think that helped me. ***Coenie:***I surely suffered in the beginning. Because getting used to something isn't easy…. There are only the emotional things of a new experience….But further everything was just so easy, it just fell into place….But, even your best friends….it can get uncomfortable….So, it isn't easy, and it is just, if you are only so many white people from your culture in another country, and you see each other every day, it won't have a pleasant effect on your relationship….if I go again, then I will rather not do it like that. I will go on my own, and that is it. ***Alina:***Pros- relationships in family, cons - the difficulties in the professional field. ***Heike:*** Leaving your home and country is a big decision –I believe people need to be able to identify if it is the right thing for them and leave for the right reasons –not because they want to "run away" from their problems. I had to grow up very quickly in this country, so I would encourage anyone to think carefully about their motivation to migrate. ***Stella:*** Yes, I would encourage others to migrate from Greece to another country for a little while, at least….I think these are the major pros and cons of migration. Being in a new country, you feel intensely alone at times, and you even have to give up relationship commitments. On the other hand, migration is necessary when one desires to expand his or her horizons or find work. ***Penny:*** I guess it depends on the individual – some people are more flexible and adapt quicker to change. I would encourage others as long as they did the research and were prepared to look forward as opposed to comparing it with their home country in a negative sense. ***Phenyo:*** Yes, however every individual's circumstances are different, but in looking at what it has done for me and the experiences it unveiled yes, I would very much encourage people to travel. ***Jesse:*** Definitely school. Educational -wise I would definitely change everything up. The system here is not meant to help people who are coming from a different place, who don't speak the same language….if I could go back, I would stand up against that….Pros, definitely a different perspective. The cons will just be the loneliness, or	– during the whole of this writing – struggling with my own thinking about the differences between forced and unforced migration. I have read so many books on slavery and the horrors of war that my thinking about forced migration is consistently infused by the images evoked by these readings. I cannot begin to imagine how people manage to settle after forcibly having been removed or forced from their countries of origin. It is a concept that is too big for me to comprehend. I find it unimaginable… Yet, Milton Erickson (1965/1980:212-223) reminds us that people can actively and continually re-author their lives. He also brought the notion that our experiential realities are constituted through language. The images the media has evoked for me about forced migration is constitutive of my story regarding how I imagine I might engage with such circumstances. It holds no experience or truth other than what is imagined – how I language it for myself. From the stories told during this inquiry, it is evident that more options than those of victimhood are possible. McNamee and Gergen (1999) remind us to consider the potentials of relational responsibility rather than blame and individualism. It would seem as if their notion that meaning is not frozen, but is perpetually in a state of becoming is indeed possible if the desire for an alternative story is there.

feeling that you are not like everyone else….100% (encourage others to migrate)… Definitely for the same reason. ***Kate:*** Cons: You go away from your familiar support group, your extended family. You become isolated, feel excluded from the family. You have to adapt to local customs and practices or otherwise you are not seen as making an effort, or appreciating the local culture….Pros: You see new and different cultural practices and customs. You widen your perspective. You learn to adapt, to see other points of view. You learn "cultural awareness". Perhaps you learn about diversity and inclusiveness. You may give yourself and your family new opportunities, new possibilities. You take them away from a difficult situation back home.	
M10. What do you think the governments of your receiving country should/could do to make it easier for you to be there?	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: I can't think what the Taiwanese could have done differently…. The book we had to study for the purposes of passing the Life in the UK Test should have been given to us in that initial office where we were questioned before we went through Passport Control….centres could be instituted in the various towns/cities where foreigners could meet and form networks. ***Coenie:***I can only think of one thing, and that is how embarrassed my friends were who didn't have a degree….if you don't have a degree, then you don't get treated like the other people. I think if the government can take away those types of things, the discrimination thing….So, actually I don't know what more the government can do, because I know that they are just the same as our government….but you have to do your own homework. ***Alina:***Nothing, they are not up to me. ***Heike:*** I remember getting a Social Security number and bank account was very difficult. ***Kon:*** Subsequently, the international organization such as IOM, in collaboration with the United Nation, interfered by accepting displaced people from the South and North alike as internal displaced people in Egypt, and referred them to countries that are willing to accept them as refugees….In 2000 I came to a conclusion that the current process in place to move a foreign trained professional to integrate into the Canadian labour market, will not support my quest in finding a sustainable and meaningful job in Ottawa, Canada. ***Stella:*** It would be helpful if Greece remains in the EU so I can be considered an EU citizen and continue to come and go in Europe as I like. It would also be helpful if	***Reflections:*** I have spoken informally with many migrants since the time (2003) we first decided to move to Taiwan, initially for a period of two years. There seems to be two main themes permeating the wishes of most of the persons I spoke with. Firstly, these conversations reflect(ed) a need and/or desire for the governments of the receiving countries to establish a network where migrants might gain information regarding the more practical issues of living in a specific country. Examples would include information on how to open a bank account, how to you obtain a cell/mobile phone contract, where do you send your children to school, etc. Secondly, the universal cry of migrants includes the need for a more simplified and accessible visa and work permit system. Persons often report that the application processes are quite officious and derogatory in nature and very, very expensive and cumbersome. Lechner and Boli (2005) make various mention of how globalisation has influenced the migratory process and how this process is becoming continually more involved and convoluted. Migrants speak of how expensive the visa/work permit process is. It would be interesting to see what percentage of the GDP of each country the income from migration constitutes. It hardly seems plausible that such governmental fiscal benefits would be forfeited for the benefit of individuals.

Britain does not veto its membership from the EU. Anyway...The government of England would make it easier for me if it continues to reinforce Laws of Equal Opportunities for everyone in the workplace and Equal Justice in Laws and Policies for everyone. Mandatory training on diversity in workplaces are [sic] also very helpful as it helps everyone to mind minorities with dignity, respect, and sense of equality. ***Penny:*** Difficult to say, other than on the work and student front – to make it easier to compete in the workplace on an equal basis and for students to have easier access to student permits and funding. The cultural, social, etc. aspects are up to the individual. ***Phenyo:*** I think the government was very accommodating, as too were the people, especially the people who proved themselves superb hosts. However I feel that the erratic immigration legislation made little sense at the best of times and became even harder to navigate as every party wanted to look like it was actively decreasing the level of immigration. ***Jesse:*** Definitely, if there were more programs to teach you - like know yourself programs, and actually stay with the students and help them learn, and tell them that they can do it. Push them to become better, because lot of them - if they have that person to stay behind with, they like to stay in that program. ***Kate:*** Provide information and training. Run information sessions for newcomers on local customs and practices, especially the bureaucratic requirements. Explain the worldview of the local community. Provide language training for newcomers. Provide special classes for the integration of migrating children, get them up-to-speed with the language. Provide education information for parents.	

B. CULTURE **(***e.g., the ways that people, living in different part of the world, classify and represent their experiences.***)**	
C1. When you think about growing up, can you think of one specific cultural tradition (e.g., birthdays) passed on to you by your family? What was the cultural flavour of the house you grew up in? What are some of the earliest memories of these cultural influences you can recall? Can you remember any rituals, celebrations or traditions of your family? What cultural values did your family teach you? Can you tell a story that would represent an illustration of the cultural ethos of your family?	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: We had many traditions….Sunday rituals…. children being seen and not heard, being respectful to adults, saying please and thank you and being very aware of discipline and authority. A child did not talk back. You did as you were told and you did not question why…. my father was an activist from the time I could remember, yet we upheld strong Dutch Reformed Calvinist beliefs. ***Coenie:***No, luckily we are not that traditional. But, there was a time where we had to sit around the table to eat, and hold hands, and pray, and then eat….Big family gatherings….So that is the only cultural, traditional thing I can think of - the family being together….The same goes for Christmas….With birthdays the presents still goes on….The same people usually write the same kinds of letters to the same people. The other lazy people only give presents. ***Alina:*** In my family read a lot, the especially traditions were no. ***Heike:*** Homemade cakes for Sunday, birthdays and other special occasions. My mum insisted that I learn to bake at a very young age… ***Stella:*** My parents used to be very active in social circles. We had lots of family friends and used to eat out and eat in at our homes together frequently. We also used to go on trips together with friends….I grew up in a relatively small town and there was a strong sense of community, fun, and values….My family also celebrated religious holidays – we used to go on short trips to monasteries and I grew up with the experience of spirituality….Christmas and Easter were for us more spiritual than commercial holidays. We had friends, lots of food, our tree, special wine, champagne – and these were all the gifts we had. ***Penny:*** Not really. I would say the culture in our family was very much one of stay inside your family and not really one of socialising outside of this. We spent quite a bit of time with the staff and their children and used to love sitting around a paint tin (used for boiling water) and eating sadza (pap) with our hands. ***Phenyo:*** …is one of the most important things I have embraced is the sense of	***Reflections:*** I find it particularly interesting that each person could speak of traditions, even though they were not necessarily family traditions. They might be traditions absorbed from others, but they became traditions nonetheless. Some of the storytellers have stories about religious traditions that are more specific, but often the stories are inspired by religion without these religious traditions having a firm influence on the family of origin. I find it interesting, as well, that these traditions still remain, with us, the storytellers, even as we grow older, *albeit* in various permutations. Whilst reading the excerpts beside from the stories about culture, I was reflecting on how much cultural tradition one would find sedimented within each of us should one only attend to the topic of cultural influence in minute and intricate detail. I am also aware that my idea of what culture is, has been steadily changing during the course of this writing. At first, I would have referred to culture as language, religion, art, music and the expression of all of these aspects within certain national or international boundaries. Now I am moving more towards an inclusive/holistic view of culture. I think of culture more as being what it is that each individual brings to a certain area of his or her life and that these contributions make up a certain multi-faceted culture. I am aware of thinking that culture is an amorphous thing that might be prodded on one side, but which will inevitably bulge out in another place – one cannot honestly completely contain it within a specific description or definition. Everyone contributes to culture in a unique way that in turn allows that culture to be what it is. Vertovec (2011:351-371) makes a case for multiculturalism often having more of a dividing nature than an incorporating and inclusive function. He argues that should the idea of 'culture' be less ill-defined, it might serve to unite rather than separates cultural groups. He further reasons that culturalist initiatives underpins the so-called "new

community which exists where I grew up. Even now upon my return having spent so many years away, returning to Temba is like returning to extended family. ***Jesse:*** …Rwanda….Just celebrations in general, and how we, when we will be together, everybody invites strangers. If you don't know them, they just come. We just eat together, and dance together….There are always people staying in my house. Even in America there are always people always there, an open house….One thing that we just always do together is going to church….To respect everyone, and always have your family's back no matter what they need. Even if I can't provide, find a way to provide for your family. Always be open and willing to help people….Another thing my parents always taught me was to treat everyone the same…They always taught me to humble myself to be equal to everyone. ***Kate:*** Sunday morning we went to Catholic Mass as a family. Sunday lunch was typically a cooked meal…Mealtimes, lunch and dinner, always started with a prayer. In the evening before we went to bed, we would kneel together and say a series of prayers….except perhaps the idea of having a family meal together. This is important to me…The cultural flavour of the house I grew up in – Catholic guilt and suffering, Protestant work ethic, English stiff-upper-lip and division of labour between sexes, i.e. male entitlement. My father taught me a strange attachment to being anti-authority….My mother showed me the values of being Catholic and the virtues thereof.	cultural racism." He cites examples of local government agencies in Britain, which have managed to engage persons from different cultures in their local governing processes, whilst other counties have not managed to achieve true diversity, but had, conversely, managed to promote discrimination. Transnationalism, which promotes the flow of people, ideas, funds and goods, seems a preferable option to a "new cultural racism" where persons are isolated by their over-inclusion.
C2. What cultural influences are still now important to you? How much of a factor in your life has your cultural background been?	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: I was raised in a home where activism was part of breathing….I find I have to daily fight his demonic work-ethic ***Coenie:***I am rebellious against everything that is traditional, but one of the things that irritate me, is what society brings….The biggest thing is respect,…And, I have been rebellious against those things for the last few years, but with some people you just have to do it, otherwise you are very disrespectful….I'll say that we are really trying to maintain our traditions at Christmas,…Christmas day is the biggest day; and sometimes birthdays. . ***Alina:***I always learn something- this is from my family. ***Heike:*** I now bake German cakes when I feel homesick as I associate the smell of the cake with home… ***Kon:*** …I have acquired most of my earliest social skills and developed a universal sense of belonging and love of human beings. Social skills acquired through my	***Reflections:*** Since starting the writing of this work, some central cultural influences have stayed with me, like my sense of activism. Activism, though, is a 'cultural influence' I absorbed in my home where I was raised. Activism was not overtly encouraged when I was growing up. Persons like Nelson Mandela were only whispered about as being a hero. I know that my parents would choose the company in which they voiced these opinions very carefully. During the last seven months of 2011, which I spent in South Africa, Mr. Julius Malema, the leader of the African National Congress (ANC) Youth League, was vociferous in his anti-establishment views. Very little could be done to silence his voice – even by the High Court. However, as I move about in the world, I increasingly find myself becoming invested in more of a 'world culture' as opposed to a national culture. So many things have contributed to my becoming an amalgam of all the little bits and pieces I have picked up

earliest socialization in Wau have later helped me in life as an adult to relate and accommodate different world cultures from Middle East to the western society with no any feelings of alienation, or nuisance. In culture I grew up in and socialized in Wau, we have been thought as young people that all elders in the town regardless of their tribes, regions, or clans are our uncles, grand mothers, fathers or aunties, not "strangers", there was no such a thing as stranger in the town, as all were accommodated and accepted.… ***Stella:*** My parents used to be very active in social circles. We had lots of family friends and used to eat out and eat in at our homes together frequently….My family also celebrated religious holidays ***Penny:*** I would say if one could call it a culture, then I would say family is still important. My siblings and I are very closely connected. ***Phenyo:*** That pertaining to the sense of community, the manner in which we take care of our old during their final years and general level of respect. I am an open book, a lot of the above will remain forever but I have married myself to other cultural influences which I welcome with open arms. ***Jesse:*** To be open to everyone, because here people are very closed-minded if you ask them 'How are you doing?', they just say: 'Oh, good'. But, I'm willing to talk about anything; I don't care, because here guys are instructed to that they can't show emotions, and to show emotions is a weakness. That's definitely what they can learn. That I can pick up. ***Kate:*** I often say that I am a "fake" English person. I like the English sense of humour. I have also been told that the English are creative, and I admire the wackiness, the eccentricity of the English.	from where I have been, from the persons whom I have spoken to, from the works I have read, and from what I have seen and experienced. I do not think that I am currently able to speak of myself as ascribing to a specific culture or cultural set. I am a confluence of bits and pieces from all over, including my notions of what I regard as 'religious', or rather, spiritual. My experience of having become an acculturated being rather than situated in or originating from a specific culture, leads me to wondering whether other migrants have the same experience? Maybe some migrants, in contrast, prefer to cling to what they had known before. It would be interesting to ask questions that inquire into what contributes to how one acculturates.
C3. Can you think of one specific cultural tradition or influence passed on to you by society in your country of origin?	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: Going to Sunday School and going to Church….I cannot see myself being in the world without a spiritual place to revert to. ***Coenie:***Just to have respect towards other people. Without that, you don't get respect. You mustn't always just see the bad things about people….I realize that for some people it is important, so I just have to be the least, and just get on with it. ***Alina:*** The friendship is a value, if you can call it as a tradition. ***Heike:*** Having an "Advent Kranz" –a decoration with 4 candles and each Sunday in the 4 weeks before Christmas one gets lit up –I still make sure now I have one every year with fresh tree branches of needle trees.	***Reflections:*** It is interesting that the story segments beside all reflect different aspects taken from societal culture. These societal cultural aspects were absorbed into one's private or family life, making it part of the family way of being. I find it interesting, too, that the societal ways were mostly uplifting ways, or interpreted as such. Phenyo speaks of being willing to absorb other cultural influences. The religious/spiritual aspects of one's culture also seem to hold specific cultural value. The details may differ, but the nature of the societal cultural influences seem to remain largely coherent. The Foucauldian notion of governmentality could quite possibly be invoked

Kon: In Southern Sudan, there is no emphasis on first and last name, as it is in the western societies. Individual are known by both first name and father's name followed by a clan, or tribe that individuals belongs to…. My perception about the barrier to the job market in Ottawa was rather more cultural and socially constructed by the gatekeepers (protectionism)... ***Stella:*** Spirituality and friendships are still important to me. With my migrations, however, and my very ,very busy life, I have lost some of these factors in my life….these are very important factors still in me. ***Penny:*** No, more terminologies that only Zimbabweans use. ***Phenyo:*** That which pertains to the sense of community, the manner in which we take care of our old during their final years and a general level of respect. ***Jesse:*** I think it's something that's with me, but I don't know, if I didn't grow up with my parents, or I didn't see them as much as I did the past couple of years, I could've wiped them off. I chose not to. No, because a lot of cultural traditions that we do have in my country are set up reasons for the genocide…They believed that they are better than the other people, there are people who are worse than them. ***Kate:*** Opening Christmas presents: you give a gift to another person and you watch them open it. Then that person gives a gift, perhaps to you or another person, and together you watch that person open it. It is not a free-for-all, pile of presents in front of each person; each person diving in to their pile and ignoring the others.	when one considers the influence of societal culture. The discourses or techniques by which a society is rendered governable are equally applicable to the individual – society is constituted by individuals. The objectification and subjugation of individuals, whether by how they are expected to show respect, are expected to attend to religious practices , the language-games they adhere to (Penny) or are named (Kon) is perpetuated and not questioned and the unvoiced cultural discourse continues to keep individuals under the "gaze" of the authorities. I recall how for the first 60 months of *my* – not my husband, as he was in the UK on my work permit – stay in the UK, I had to report to Lunar House, in Croydon, London, every time I changed my home address or my job. Every time I reported to Lunar House, I had to pay £500.00. If I did not report to Lunar House and I was identified, we could be deported by the Home Office, never to be allowed back into the UK again. For the first five years of our stay in the UK, we daily experienced living in a version of Jeremy Bentham's panopticon.
C4. How did you experience the new culture you moved into? Difficult? Easy? What made it so?	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: UK***:*** Both difficult and easy. I could speak the commonly spoken language in the UK – English, yet I could not always play the language games of the profession I had moved into…. being constantly put down and criticised for not having been trained in the UK….Nothing about Taiwan was easy, except entering through Passport Control. ***Coenie:***Totally different. Except for, they also have the whole respect thing for other people. But everything from believing and religious beliefs is the same thing. Food, the way they live, the way they drive, the way they talk to other people, just everything being different, that was nice. And, of course there was many things that irritated me….Sometimes you think your own race is a bunch of common people. How many of them are like that? But, every race has its "rejects", and ways that irritate you. ***Alina:***It's difficult to tell.	***Reflections:*** It would seem as if moving into a new culture is both easy and difficult. It would seem as if the things one might have found difficult in your country of origin might also be difficult for you in your destination country. If the spoken language in your new country was very different from your own, that would contribute to difficulties, whereas it would be easier if a language you were familiar with was spoken or at least understood. If the food was very different to the food your constitution was used to, that could contribute to difficulties in your everyday life. It would also seem as if the helpfulness of the persons you were in immediate contact with would contribute to the move being regarded as easy or more difficult. If one moves to a country/place where one can link with family, friends or at least contacts, the transition could be easier. The overriding sense of having someone at hand who already understands the mechanics of the new community seems to be

Heike: I found and still do English culture easier as things seem less complicated than back home…. English people are very polite and not always say what they mean –this can be good, but also difficult –It took me time to work out that "this is nice" – sometimes means "this is a real bore!" ***Kon:*** I spent one year in Zagazig Institute of Commerce, Egypt, where I had my earliest experience with people that were culturally and ethnically different from me, and also to have sense of being in a second country for the first time…. As a non-English, ethnic and African Sudanese/Canadian native person, I do consider all of the degrees I have received including the Canadian degree as foreign. None of these degrees programs were taught in my language or in the context of my culture. ***Stella:*** Both: easy and difficult. Easy because I feel quite privileged as a migrant. I migrated to cultural and well-developed parts in the world. Through migration, I received a lot more than I would have received if I were in my country….It has been difficult, too, because I do not really get a sense of solidarity as I do when I am in Greece – basically, a migrant is pretty much on his/her own and has to overcome own difficulties independently….My communal life was lost when I migrated. ***Penny:*** Difficult, the Afrikaans culture in a mining town was very unsophisticated and abrasive ***Phenyo:*** It was not merely isolated to a single culture. London is still British but has to a minor degree adopted aspects of various cultures as its own. However I embraced English culture with ease and it was not foreign to me. Owing to various factors but especially that of an integrated world our cultures are very integrated. ***Jesse:*** Definitely it would have been harder, because you are not around as many people, so like at school I'm around people that I had to speak English to, and I always have to. It was kind of harder for my parents because they didn't pick the language up as fast, because they were not around that many, so it is definitely difficult….They have a strong accent. ***Kate:*** It was easy for me to move into the American culture, easy for me to have an American accent, and dress in an American way. It was more difficult to move into the Swiss-German culture. In school I was supposed to learn German yet the other kids spoke Swiss-German, a dialect, and it was difficult to learn.	at the centre of whether it is, at first, difficult or easy to be absorbed into a new community. It has to be said, though, that even though this may be the case, other aspects may arise at different times, which could regarded as less easy. My reflections upon this particular aspect is imbued with a question about one's personal resilience – whether how one discourses about what is happening in one's life contributes to how one experiences what is happening at any stage in your life. For Coenie it was an adventure in Taiwan; for us it was hardship. Where and how does the meaning-making of our experience come about? Bűrgelt, Morgan, and Pernice (2011:707-730) identified five phases of migration during their inquiry. These phases are organised around the central category of "living the dream" and are strongly interconnected across all five the phases. The latter refers to how the different phases are not completed linearly, but can and do interrelate. The phases and components of migration they noticed (2011:715) are: (1) *the development of the dream and the readiness to migrate:* (why you had to leave – recognising the relevant pushes/pulls); (2) *enlivening the dream:* (various factors had to come together for action to be taken, but the decision is mostly emotional rather than rational); (3) *realising the dream - starting a new life:* (actually experiencing living in a new country – feeling like a new-born even though migration is hard and uncertain as cultures differ); (4) *reaping the fruits of living the dream:* (migration is always a success - whether one stayed or returned - due to gained experiences) and (5) *weighing up*: choosing the path most conducive for fulfilment of future dreams. Both stayers and returners were able to consciously decide on their future course of action as they realised that returning to their country of origin was not failing as other pushes/pulls had become apparent.

C5. How much of the culture you moved into did you absorb, do you think? Are you OK with what you absorbed? What did you absorb that you would rather now discard? Would you prefer to move away from your adopted culture back to your culture of origin? Why/Why not? What do you still find strange about your new culture? Could you tell a story or tell about an incident that would describe how you interacted with the other culture you now found yourself immersed into?	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: In Taiwan I absorbed the way one was taken care of in the Buddhist hospitals….In the UK I absorbed the benefits of living in a first world country with all the benefits of a first world country….I would like to discard the disregard, the harshness, that I now have for what is 'sacred' to others. Nothing shocks me anymore and swearing is just another set of words in common usage…. After these past seven months, I now know I don't want to live in South Africa…. A story would probably have to be the story of how every time, irrespective of which country I find myself in, I still speak about pounds! ***Danielle:***…I had one client for a year, who had lived in Canada, and who had lived in Toronto. Then went to live in France, and then went to live in England, and then came back to Toronto….she had a very hard time re-adapting again. I mentioned that to my sister….she said the same thing. Coming back is never easy. I have another friend who is German….then moved to Japan…They just moved back to Germany, and she is having a very hard time re-adapting to Germany. And it's her country. It's where she was born. ***Coenie:***When I arrived back in South Africa, I had to learn things again like…The longer you are in another country, I think, that is if you are single, the more their lifestyle and way of living gets to be part of you, and I accepted it….Even the food. I was less fussy when I came back to South Africa….Some people will get a fit if they go into one of their temples. I took my camera, and with big festivals I took photos inside the temples, and watched what they were doing. That was the best of all. *Alina:* It's hard for me to accept dishonesty, which is considered here as a good education. ***Heike:*** I'm not sure. I sometimes find it hard to be "in between countries." I know that I will never be "British" regardless of how long I live here. And I feel very detached from Germany… I have come to accept that I'm not 100% part of the two cultures anymore due to not feeling a full part of either one of them. ***Stella:*** I think I absorbed a lot from the cultures I migrated into….So, migration made me feel both stronger and humble….What is negative though is that fighting for	***Reflections:*** These story segments speak of the storytellers having absorbed much from their destination countries, but being happy about what they adopted. This immediately makes me wonder whether we choose in some way what we adopt and what we don't adopt without thinking about it too much. Tielman Skyped with me a few minutes ago. He Skyped as I was reading the passage I had written about why I don't want to return to live in South Africa permanently. He was audibly distressed. Last night he had slept at his sister's house. He had gone to fetch his mother whom had been visiting with them. The visit had grown late and rather than driving back in the dark - with the dangers inherent to that practice in South Africa - he had stayed over at his sister's house. When he and his mother arrived home, they realised that the house had been burgled during Tielman's absence. Everything of value had been taken, including his passport and South African Identity document, without which one cannot affect *any* manner of business in South Africa. The robbers had thrown his 92-year old mother's most private and intimate clothing all over the floor and walked upon it. He had called the police and they had come to the house some time later. They made a list of what had been stolen, gave him a Case Number and had left without any indication of ever planning an attempt to apprehend the guilty party or parties. The intensity of the anger and disgust and humiliation I felt at his telling, was unquantifiable. It brought back to my mind the other two times our house had been robbed. Once before we had left for Taiwan and once two weeks before we left to come to America. It reminded me why I do not want to live in South Africa. It reminded me of the disregard of the police, of the disregard others have for your property and person and the way one has no recourse in these instances. It reminded me how many atrocities were perpetrated during the Apartheids era, but also how there was mostly a sense of safety, as the infrastructure in the country was not corrupt. It made me weep as I am typing this reflection to think that this is what Kon and Jesse and

solving challenges independently in a new country can make you quite self-absorbed. Not being in my own country, I lost of course my constant long-life friends and my sense of community. ***Penny:*** None. Even when I was an adult people would often ask where I was from as I did not speak like a local and I behaved differently. Now it is not noticeable anymore. I have fitted into the Johannesburg culture and would not know what it feels like to belong anywhere else. ***Phenyo:*** It would be very difficult to quantify how much of the British culture I adopted during my time there or that was already a part of me via the tutelage of my parents. There is nothing I gained during my time in the UK that I would rather discard. ***Jesse:*** I think I absorbed a lot. The things that I like, their music, and their sports, the fashion and the stuff like that. I definitely absorbed more of that American… I'm okay with that. It doesn't bother me….Definitely the connections I had with people there, when I lived there, because it is not the same here….One day, yes….I want to go back to visit. To live there, probably when I'm like 80 or something. I will probably go and retire there….Everybody does everything just in order to satisfy whatever needs they have. ***Kate:*** I think I absorbed quite a lot from both the American and Swiss-German culture. I'm ok with what I absorbed. I prefer to move away from the English culture because of the class system, the one-upmanship and the bullying. However there is one thing that scares me in the Swiss culture and that is the unexpected back-lash of xenophobia….Swiss can be terribly harsh at times when you think that they are with you….They look so discreet, so prim and proper, and then they have these angry words that I find stun me.	Penny and possibly Danielle must have suffered, *in extremis*, during their lives and before fleeing to a place of safety. Right now it is with a sense of sadness and emptiness that I continue my reflections…
C6. What do you think the idea of culture includes? How would you describe it? If you had to write a definition about the concept of culture, what would that definition include?	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: culture includes, food, dance, music, religion, ways of doing (e.g., driving), language, rituals, common practices….the meaning one makes around certain ideas. ***Danielle:*** Food, music… I know people who are of the same culture, who have absolutely different values from mine. And yet I know people who are Canadian who have the same values. ***Gabriella:*** History, literature, art…. for me the culture is a lot about values. ***Coenie:***Everything from religion to eating habits; the lifestyle….the culture in those	***Reflections:*** Culture is about so much more than we can state in a single paragraph. It is about everything that the storytellers have noted and more. As Jesse says: "but deep inside it's still there. It's who you are." During my inquiry into what culture is, I have managed to read many and various attempts to define culture. There are those theorists who try to define culture by using the paradigm they are writing from as the starting point of their definitions. There are those that take the aspects of culture and define

(Taiwanese) schools that is much different than the culture in our schools; totally, totally different. ***Alina:***Local culture is ability to live tasty, nice and quiet, culture in general is more than that and this and more other things. ***Heike:*** Culture can mean a lot of things –music; traditions; common customs –I would describe it as a mixture of all of these things within a country or place to live. I notice that different parts of Great Britain have different cultural influences and feel –for instance, Ireland seems to have still a strong Celtic influence and culture that is being preserved. ***Stella:*** Culture is a word that describes the inherited values, attitudes, and behaviours of a particular society as a whole or a particular social group. It also refers to education and the arts. ***Penny:*** I would say it includes attitude, dress, language, food, social activities, national pride, and sport. It gives people a sense of belonging and identification. ***Phenyo:*** A set of shared beliefs, attitudes, values, aspirations that categorises a unique group or people. ***Jesse:*** Culture for me definitely would be something that I value. Something that I can't change about myself that you may try to change, but deep inside it's the same. You might cover it up with an American accent, but deep inside it's still there. It's who you are…. That would be about food. Food is a big thing. Dancing, we love to dance. They love drinking in our country. Drinking is definitely in our culture… ***Kate:*** Culture is the mix of common behaviours, patterns of actions, values and worldviews in a community. It is demonstrated through actions. What You See Is What You Get.	culture by putting these aspects into specific categories. There are those that admit that they cannot define culture adequately. It is with the latter group that I choose to stand. My perception of culture is that it is multi-faceted, multi-layered, multi-voiced. I have come to think metaphorically of culture as being like a diamond. Depending on how the light refracts upon the facets of the diamond, that is how the diamond will present itself. I know that I am part of many cultures. Within each of these cultures I am a different version of the same me, depending on what prevails at a certain juncture. I can be a student. I can be a visitor, I can be South African or British. I can be an adjunct faculty member. I can be a wife. I can be mother. I can be a friend. I can be an author. I can be all of these things at the same time, whilst sitting in a chair in the library, depending upon which button is being pushed for me whilst sitting in that chair in the library, not physically moving anywhere at all. I inhabit certain cultures at different times and I bring a bit of me to each of those times and I take a bit of the interaction away with me every time. I build culture as I go about life…
C7. Do you experience a sense of belonging/community in the country you migrated to? Does this community which you have now become part of include local people or did you gravitate more towards your 'own' people who live in your new country?	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: Yes, I belonged. During working hours, I belonged to the community that made up the place where I worked. After hours, I gravitated towards fellow South Africans that live in the area I resided in… ***Danielle:*** The question that still remains in my mind is whether the age which one immigrates makes a difference. I haven't figured that one out yet. Because, it seems to me that someone who immigrates at a very young age should be able to integrate much more easily. That's the logical conclusion that I come to. So I questioned me [sic] why I struggled so much, and why I still don't feel integrated.	***Reflections:*** Do I belong? If I had not had the Skype call from my husband a few minutes ago telling me about the burglary at their house, I would have said an emphatic "No, I don't experience a sense of belonging anywhere, really." Now I feel as if I belong in England. I find it an enigma that I stepped off the airplane at JFK in New York and immediately felt a sense of belonging. That sense has not left me for one iota of time during the past months I have resided in America. Yet, the knowing that I sense a belonging in America is bitter-sweet, as I know I will never be allowed to live here on a permanent

Gabriella: I feel Canadian…. I can say that in certain situations, especially when I talk and I can't express myself well. I'm just like, I can't talk, this is so hard, and why can't I just like anybody else to feel part of the conversation. But, I don't always feel outsider. I feel at home. Maybe I'm the lucky one. I feel good, and I feel at home. And I don't regret it. And I don't want to go back ***Coenie:***If other South Africans weren't there, then it certainly would have been a lot more difficult….Certainly with the other South Africans too, there was a "sense of belonging", and the Taiwanese people went out of their way to help you, and to get you settled. But, I won't give up my time to mingle with them the whole time, because, they are not your people, and it is not that easy….But the "sense of belonging" is nice just up until a month. You don't want to be in their company the whole time. You also want to mingle with your friends, your people. ***Alina:***I hurt when somebody tell bad about Italian people or about Russian people, I identify myself with two people. ***Heike:*** I feel a sense of belongings with my friends and family and people at work. ***Kon:*** I still love most of the human and social values in Canada which always makes me proud to call myself a Canadian; Values such as human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Foreign Credentials and Working in Ottawa/Canada. ***Stella:*** I have experienced a strong sense of community when I was a student at my Universities. I hardly have experienced a sense of community in my second migratory….I definitely gravitate a lot more towards my own people who live in my new country. There is a sense of familiarity and fun to talk to them. ***Penny:*** Yes, I now feel I am more South African than Zimbabwean. ***Phenyo:*** I think living in a city like London is very different to living in Oxford; not only because the population are more homogenous in Oxford, but its culture is different to that which you may experience in London. Yet both are still largely English. ***Jesse:*** Sometimes I do, but sometimes I feel different. It will also be the same thing if I go back, because I've been away from there for so long, that I'll just feel like okay I don't fit here, I don't fit there. I'm afraid that I will not adapt. ***Kate:*** I am definitely part of the Geneva community, but as Geneva has over 40% of foreigners in the canton, it is easy to find like-minded people. But I am definitely not an expat, and I do not meet with expats. I would say it is more typical to have friends who work in non-Swiss companies or organisations, or have a non-Swiss partner. In my children's class in "inner city" Geneva, there were 2 Swiss out of a class of 22.	basis. The American laws and constrictions to non-national migration to the USA are notorious. The more I ponder this thing of belonging, the more remote the grasp of it becomes to me. The storytellers tell their stories of both belonging and not belonging. Cohen (2010) tells of how one is integrated into a country and how that integration contributes to a sense of belonging or alienation. I was born in South Africa, yet I feel completely alienated from it. How would it be for me if I made my mind up that I belonged in England and worked at belonging in England? Involving myself in the community and settling more permanently in one area? I wonder … I am reminded of Lazarus Salamon's statement: "… *And this is the only country where you're not a stranger, because we are all strangers. It's only a matter of time who got here first.* (see Chapter Four above). Giddens (1990:37-38) is of the opinion that tradition is a way of handling time and space which inserts any activity within temporality. Molly Andrews (2007:489-511) speaks of the same experiences I encounter. She tells about her experience of people continuously asking about her accent and the one-lined response she has developed in response to the simple question that immediately sets one apart; makes you stand out as different and as not belonging. Yet, the ability to construct such a response speaks of a migrant's ability to employ double vision to whatever appears before them - finding ways to explain that are non-committal and non-offensive.

C. IDENTITY (*e.g., how you would describe yourself.*)	
I1. What in your adopted country shaped you the most in describing yourself as you would at the moment? Why do you think this shaped you in the way it has? What would you describe as the main things you learned about yourself whilst living in this culture different to your own?	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: Not enough, stupid, not measuring up, slave, not good enough, clown….I was trained in South Africa as a counselling psychologist….I could withstand their critique, that I had the gumption to carry on no matter what, and that I had the ability to have compassion with others who were going through the same experience and that I was indeed effective at my job and at managing a department. ***Coenie:***I know I already came a long way. I don't want to brag, but I am certainly much better off than most of my friends who haven't seen the world yet, who haven't seen other things and people yet. So just everything I experienced there and the people that I worked with had an influence on me. The fact that I was independent definitely had an influence on the fact that I am not the same Coenie now as I was before….But I am totally different about how I now see and think about things….It is just that thing of don't judge people, that kind of thing. I also now know that there are other cultures that are not too bad….I am very happy for the type of things, good and bad, that happened to me. It broadened my head and mind totally. ***Alina:***I realized I was very small. ***Heike:*** I have learned that I can change…. to realise that you can achieve any goal you want as long as you have a plan on how to make this happen….has made me into a stronger person, emotionally much stronger and also more understanding of my needs and those from others around me….I found that values from Germany has helped me a great deal – being organised, saving money, working hard to achieve goals in England, but that values in England – being positive about change; believing that I'm worthy of achieving good things has led me to success and happiness in this country. ***Kon:*** As a result, I had decided to stay in Egypt until the political instability in Sudan changed. My decision to stay in Egypt has then changed my identity from a Sudanese Citizen studying in Egypt, to a displaced person without a home country…. Many of us (students) become a resources [sic] for many of new displaced that come to Egypt in their early stages of resettlement as most of them don't know where to stay, where to go, or what to do….it took me years to understand that my degree is	***Reflections:*** The storytellers tell about feeling more independent and knowing they can change and a sense of accomplishment and growing in ways they preferred for themselves. When I answered the Story Guide, my story was about not-enoughness; of being a slave. As time has progressed and a confluence of events have transpired, I am now closer to how I would have described myself when I set out into the world initially. A sense of "I can conquer the world. I am strong and determined and I work hard. I can conquer the world." Writing this dissertation has brought healing to me in so many ways. It has helped me realise that my voice has a place in this world; that I am not a 'nothing', as I was so often deemed to be in England; that I am able to still set my mind to a task and achieve that task; to embark on a course of action that would be to the greater good of others (most of the storytellers had told me that speaking with me about migration had changed so much in their own lives in ways that they preferred); that I could settle in a strange country and make it work for me; that I could read and understand and integrate literature at an advanced level; and that I could go back to a place I had been before (England) and reshape and remodel that experience into an experience that would be more preferable for me. Reading the work of the authors on Social Construction and the work of the predecessors of Social Construction affirmed for me that I am not misguided in upholding the meta-discourse of Social Construction. The Medical Model is a way of looking at the world, but does not need to inscribe me in a way that is not how I prefer to be in the world and how it is that I choose to go on together with others. I am allowed to be the Margot I choose to be without a being deemed unworthy by those who uphold a more scientific way of going about their world. Their ways do not have to be my ways and that is OK. I will forever hear Sheila's voice: "It is just another way of talking about something. It is not necessarily the ultimate Truth." Sitting in Sheila's seminars, with her students, has contributed to my re-inscription of myself in so many ways. The

comparable to that of the Canadian degree, but not treated the same as one obtained from Canadian institution as far as employers concerned. ***Stella:*** I am a lot more independent than I used to be. I am also a more goal-oriented individual who looks at the pros and cons of choices. I make choices by being more aware of the consequences. At times, I feel that I enjoy more looking at the future than being in the moment, in the present. I am also less of a complainer than other fellow Greeks. I have learnt to concentrate on my tasks and have a perspective on finding the most adaptable solution. I feel that I have been shaped as a more self-contained individual who takes more responsibility of [her] own choices. ***Penny:*** South Africa was always viewed as the land of milk and honey and that you could be whatever you wanted to be. The opportunity was there for the taking. This gave me a sense of hope for creating my own successful life. I learnt that I am incredibly strong and resilient, that nothing is permanent and you create your own happiness and success. ***Phenyo:*** My ability and willingness to be more open-minded, when you are living in such a city as richly diverse as what the London is, you are challenged to explore beyond some of the truths you have always subscribed to. It shaped my perception because it evidenced some sources of ignorance in my being which I had initially thought I was void of. Be welcoming and open to all before rushing to judge, more so in practice than merely theoretical disposition. ***Jesse:*** I guess that the times in my life where I didn't fit in, I was just by myself; that definitely shaped me to who I am and being comfortable with myself….I had to learn how to be comfortable with myself, and accept the things that made me different, and take value to it, because at first I hated it. I hated it a lot. One day I was just like, forget this, this is who I am, I guess. ***Kate:*** I like order, cleanliness. I like the Swiss who work hard, take responsibility for their own well-being and financial security. I suppose it is in the comparison of experiences and understanding preferences. I worked in England in 1978 and couldn't stand it when people called in sick cause they wanted to go out to a party, or the way they skived off doing their work. Perhaps the combination of what my father taught me and how the Swiss seemed to have this Protestant work ethic made me feel at home.	knowing that I was accepted and even liked by the young people in class. The knowing that there is hope for the world when I look into the faces and eyes of these young people. The knowing that I am *not* misguided. What I choose to hold dear to me – Social Construction and all its meaning-making – has a viable place and a necessary place in this world. Most importantly, though, I have come to realise that as much as I would like to be allowed to be the me I prefer to be, as much do those who do not hold on to the discourse of Social Construction have the right to be allowed to be in the world in a way that they prefer. It does not have to be an either/or situation. Both/and opens up conversations and possibilities and that is what I want to take back to England, as that is quite possibly where I will return to. This knowing frees me above all else. I agree with Stephanie Taylor (2010: 57-71) when she describes how we remember and what we choose to remember. I have now been freed, through generative conversations and reading, to remember differently, generatively – to see myself as a person of possibilities and potentialities, even within a modernist machine!

I2. What are some of the best memories about the culture you migrated to and do you hold some less preferable memories about this culture? Would you mind telling about a less preferable memory?	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: The best memory must be the day I received my British Citizenship….When my British passport arrived on the Saturday, I took the ferry to Calais on the Sunday – just because I could. I sat in the park in Calais for about three hours and meditated, had a lunch of mussels in a street café and took the ferry back to Dover. I did this all on my own as I had no one to share it with. The latter is my less preferable memory. ***Coenie:*** **…** it depends on what type of things they are. You realize it is the way they talk. Sometimes they shout at you. Or, it is the way they chew chewing gum. They chew with their mouths open. You get used to it, and make peace with it. Another interesting thing is that they don't get mad at each other on the roads. ***Alina:***There I was much more attractive and interesting for the other. ***Heike:*** I remember once going into a pub and ordering a Coke. I recall a man in the pub asking me, which country I come from. When I said Germany, he punched me in the face!... I also remember having a very traditional English Christmas when I worked as a care worker in Leatherhead –it was absolutely brilliant and I was made feel very welcome. ***Stella:*** The cultures I migrated to gave me the opportunities to reach my own limits and expand my own horizons. I think my less preferable memory during migration has been the sense of alienation and loneliness. It is difficult to start over again to a new culture where you are not grown up to a certain community and you do not really feel belong to a social group. This experience often fades – it is in the background in my life, because I am busy with my work. It is intense when I am less busy. ***Penny:*** Local culture is sport-mad and fantastic how a whole country rallies behind its team. I would say the flipside of this is how fanatical and narrow-minded people can be. Witnessing prejudice to other cultures and religions has always been something that I haven't liked. That has shifted now though. ***Phenyo:*** The rich textured souls I call my friends, they form my fondest memories. Less favourable were some of the lonely nights and days I spent as I travelled a path of enlightenment, if that is what it may be called. London is a beautiful city but there come seasons when it can be immensely lonely, but perhaps that is a reflection of the questions I was seeking answers to, but struggled to find.	***Reflections:*** I read my question and I wonder why I asked about a story of a less preferred memory. I now wish I had not done that. In reading the responses of the storytellers, I notice that not everyone chose to tell a story of a less-preferred memory. There could be various reasons for that, but I deem it not important at this juncture to explicate the why thereof. It would seem to me that themes of not-belonging, loneliness and difference permeate the not-preferred stories of the storytellers. The accomplishments the storytellers speak of are infused by stories of hard work and tenacity. Stories of making it work even in the face of hardship and when things could have gone really wrong for you. Stories that speak of integrity and hope. Bűrgelt, Morgan, and Pernice (2011:707-730) describe how migration is a major life-transition that exposes migrants to different cultural values, beliefs, practices, as well as, possibly, hostility and discrimination. Adapting to these distresses may result in these adverse encounters contributing to less preferred stories being told or thought by the migrant. The meanings the migrants ascribe to their experiences can, however, lead to well-being and growth depending on their interactions with the environment and their skill to engage with what it is that they prefer for their lives.

Jesse: I don't know. I just don't value myself highly….being a migrant child always moving around, you are always going to be different than other people. You start not liking yourself. Moving here made it worst, because I realized it more,…and I was definitely different than everyone else….we finally got a house….and that was a long time coming. That was good, and that ideal, the American hard work and opportunities. In Africa someone could be working his ass off for his whole life and never make it that far. Here you know like, there's a change you can make it. ***Kate:*** When I was a child, we went to see some expat friends. My parents moved around in the expat community in Zurich. We arrived and got out of the car, and our friends came out to greet us in the road. We were all standing there together, and their neighbours walked out of their house and past us. The neighbours stopped and said "Gruezi" and shook everybody's hand. We , the expat children, looked and smiled, as we learned to do in America. Their child looked at us and smiled too. And then the father hit his son across the back of the head, and said something, and the child stopped smiling and shook everybody's hand. I remember once talking in Swiss-German to someone and at some point he said to me, "You aren't Swiss-German, are you? I hear a slight accent, are you Dutch?" I felt that a barrier came up between us as soon as he said that I wasn't Swiss-German.	
I3. What did you accomplish in the country you moved to that you think you would not have accomplished in your country of origin?	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: …In the UK, the highest level you can reach is that of consultant psychologist….before you start within the hierarchy of departmental heads, etc. I also managed various psychology departments… ***Coenie:***I am good with children. I am good with people. Because, I don't always compare myself to other people, it was much easier for me to get accepted by people from the Taiwanese culture than I to get accepted by many of my other friends and people….They think I am a good listener. But the thing that I could be a bit on my own, I wouldn't have known that. I knew it will always be nice, but I made a great success of it. Naturally, it had a lot of its advantages and disadvantages. I think that Taiwan surely summarized it that it was possible, and very nice to do something like that. ***Alina:***I have a very good relationship with my Italian husband. In Moldova the relationship with my ex-husband did not work. ***Heike:*** I was able to follow my dreams, go to university and have a career. ***Penny:*** It is difficult to say because one cannot predict how life would have turned	*Reflections:* The answers to this question brought a big smile to my face – a rather serious face, at the moment! I heard the sounds of bells ringing and celebration in my mind's ear. How I wish I could bring all the storytellers together for a big, big celebration of all we had achieved during our migrations. A celebration that had no time limit, but ended a natural end when all the stories of triumphs big and small had been told and retold and celebrated and written up in the annals of life. A celebration that would inscribe victories big and small on our hearts and in our minds to strengthen us for the inevitability of the hardships to come. To have the richness of a celebration of our ways of being in the world always only one thought away. To have the connections we made to draw on for the rest of time. What a celebration that would be… I am reminded of Gergen and Gergen (2004:66-67), who speak of how we might talk to each other in ways that would allow us to live together more amicably. If we were to go about our telling and talking in ways where we consider the forms of talk we use – how we say

out had I not migrated. ***Phenyo:*** I found myself, refined my purpose on this earth and I think the environment was set in such a manner that it allowed me to mature to the concerned levels in the steps of maturity. I expanded my wealth of experience and perception that awakened another world which may very much have been alien to me. ***Jesse:*** To find your own identity. You learned how to care about yourself more, and to like, value yourself to be different than everyone else….Probably not, I don't think I would have, school is not really my thing. I always moved around a lot, and I just never valued school, because I was worse than everyone else, because every time I have to move, I had to learn a language over again. I just did not like school, because I thought I was never going to be good enough. ***Kate:*** Learned Swiss-German and French.	things, what we emphasise, where we allow the silences to fall, the laughter to intercept, we might be able to go on together in ways that contribute to our stories we tell ourselves about ourselves and tell other persons about themselves. We might be able to walk in the world in ways that draw others to us, so that they might be assisted with making new meanings of the meanings that have no place in their lives any longer – creating thicker versions of the stories they like about themselves and having their sparkling moments captured and illuminated so that they hang as beacons to follow.
I4. Do you think there is something that you would like the Authorities (e.g., United Nations, International Office of Migration, Governments) world-wide to know that might help migrants all over the world?	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: Migrants are people. Not statistics. May we please be treated as people and not as statistics? ***Alina:***Vocational guidance should be more effective. ***Heike:*** I think it would be good for people to have the opportunity to do more international work placements, to give people a chance to experience life and work in a different country. ***Kon:*** As the war kept getting worst in Sudan, the number of migrants continue to increase, and their situation in Egypt begun to deteriorate due to lack of services and resettlement programs….most of western countries opened their doors to accept Southern Sudanese as immigrants in their countries….many southerners left their homeland to seek refuge in neighbouring countries especially when the civil war between the south and north has intensified in 1990s….many Sudanese and southern Sudanese in particular have found themselves in countries such as Australia, United States of America, most of European Union and Canada. ***Stella:*** Migrants are people with very strong will and they are sufferers. They work hard….They know that migration is not really their choice;…Migration is not vacation. Migrants are uprooted….They are disadvantaged and can easily feel exploited….they do not have the choice to pursue their human rights and do not have adequate support….In migration, one loses the sense of solidarity and struggles to meet the	***Reflections:*** The storytellers allude to various things they would like the authorities to take note of. My sense is that migrants struggle with a universal sense of inequality. We are treated as statistics, and our stories – our tellings - are seldom heard. I wonder how it would change things if major newspapers in all countries could have a daily, or even weekly, column where the stories and experiences of migrants may be told. What if the major TV companies (CNN, etc.) could have a weekly insert about migrants. Imagine a soap opera about migrants and their trials, tribulations, victories and settling in! Oh, my, that would *so* work in England! The regular English citizen is soapy-mad! Imagine the revolution in understanding these simple strategies could start? The identity of the migrant as interloper could change to the migrant as celebrity!

means end [sic] …..they also have a lot to offer in a society. ***Penny:*** I think they need to do something about the prejudice against non-nationals. ***Phenyo:*** I am a proponent of free migration, but it is simply not practical and thus I would like the powers that be to exercise my practicality to the "laws" they establish. ***Jesse:*** The best thing would be to go see how they are living, and see their lifestyle, and talk to them …do you feel like you're learning in school, and what could you get out of this….The governor's wife came here, and she was talking about the obesity problem. She was like, if everyone can walk an hour every day,…I was like, a lot of people can't, because they work 16 hours a day… ***Kate:*** That there is also a poor-rich divide of migrants. Those who are poor are supposed to make more efforts in conforming to the local culture whereas those who are rich are not.	
I5. When you left your country of origin, how would you have described yourself at that stage? How would one of the significant people in your life have described you at that time?	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: I would have described myself as successful….Significant others would probably have described me as someone rather important in the community. ***Coenie:***A man with a degree, well done. That is what everybody said to me. Naturally that is not how I felt….My experience was as now. I actually don't know what I want to do. But, I have the need for adventure, to experience something different….There is Stephan who sent me an email or sms when I was in Taiwan, that at that time he didn't have the guts to have done what I was doing. They thought it took a lot of guts… ***Alina:*** I had to change life, and I hoped. ***Heike:*** I would say that I was feeling low in general…. I would think that some of my friends probably would describe me as a bit "crazy" at the time…. They also thought I was "quite brave" to do it. ***Kon:*** I left Zagazig for the City of Alexandria to start my first year's classes in May 1990. I completed my degree in May 1994 and remained in Egypt with many other displaced refugees from my home region in Southern Sudan who had left the country because of the civil war. ***Stella:*** Before I left to the US, I used to be quite scared to ride buses on my own….I am now a lot more independent and someone who has learnt to take responsibility of my own actions. I have developed a work ethic and have learnt more about human rights. I am also a lot more tolerant to difference and have learnt to question	***Reflections:*** This question fits with the next question. I will treat them as a unit and respond in the next section.

and analyse closed-ended statements. ***Penny:*** I was very young, naive and introverted. ***Phenyo:*** Self: Immensely talented but undergoing a sea of torrents in the pursuit of self-awareness and understanding. Other : Kind, talented, driven can sometime be somewhat isolated. ***Jesse:*** I was ecstatic. I was so happy to get out. I was like "Oh, I'm going to America." It is going to be amazing. Everything is going to be better from now on. Wrong. ***Kate:*** Naughty, rebellious.	
I6. How would you describe yourself now that you have migrated? How would one of the significant persons in your life now describe you?	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: I would describe myself as rootless. Floating. Not knowing where I belong. As being in-between….there are others who would describe me as brave and an example of courage as I am setting out and doing the things I want to do for myself. I know that my husband and children would tell of their pride about the fact that I have pushed through and done what I have set out to do…I cannot even begin to think what my mother and father would have said if they were still in this life. ***Danielle:*** You know what that brings to mind, is that one is always searching. I'm always searching for my identity. It goes back to the very beginning, to the very first question. You know, I'm always searching for my identity. I still don't know how to define myself. ***Coenie:***I would still describe that Coenie now as undecided….I'm definitely a much broader minded guy than the one who went beforehand….and [I] know a lot more about life than before….Wonderful, even though there were marks left from the whole Taiwan expedition, not just from the accident...I now have more contact with the people who helped me in the hospital than the other people I still have in Taiwan… ***Alina:*** I want nothing. ***Heike:*** "Happy and positive." I would also think that people around me would describe me as a generally happy person, who enjoys life. ***Kon:*** Migration for me then was all about education, better opportunities and prosperity in lands that understand concepts of human rights and good governance. My perceptions of discrimination and ethnocentric behaviour were mostly linked to so-called underdeveloped countries as I always read in literature. ***Stella:*** I have gained tremendous knowledge and experiences in these processes.	***Reflections:*** It is exciting to see how the stories of before and after merge, ebb and flow. Most of the storytellers tell of how they had overcome; how independence and a better understanding of themselves had evolved from their migrations. If I had to write my story now, it would be a very different story. After having resided in the USA, though probably in a very protected area, I will tell a rather different story than the one I told after leaving England. I am on my way back to England with a sense of overcoming – overcoming the story I told about myself when I left there one year ago. I wonder, once I had lived back there for one year, what my story would be like at that stage? Would I still have the story of a conquering spirit to tell or would my previous story have overtaken me again? What an exciting time lies ahead for me! Bűrgelt, Morgan and Pernice (2011:707-730) describe the factors that influence one's staying in one's chosen destination country. They regard the migrant's personal characteristics, values, beliefs, attitudes, and strategies as important when considering migration. The social conditions in the destination country also have a role to play in the migrant's decision-making process about whether to remain in the destination country, or not. Factors that influence leaving the destination country and returning home are the same as those for deciding to remain in the destination country: personal characteristics, values, beliefs, attitudes, and the strategies aggravating the return to the country of origin. It is important to note that the interpretations migrants attach to the stories they tell themselves and others about their experiences are of prime importance. As said before, it remains vital to remain aware that no such thing as 'failed migration' is possible – another set

But I have also been quite of a self-conscious, self-contained and action-oriented individual….When I visit Greece, I realize that my friends and family are simple, a lot more giving and happier living at the present….My independence has shaped me tremendously – it has shaped my opinions, values, social behaviour, and work ethic. ***Penny:*** Strong and capable. Survivor mentality – do what needs to be done. ***Phenyo:*** Self: Talented, passionate, evolved sense of awareness. Other: Talented, driven, sympathetic, open minded. ***Jesse:*** Quiet kid that doesn't like to talk….My dad, I don't know what he will say. But, my mom, that would be like "he is more outgoing now and he likes to have fun." I push myself too far sometimes. I like meeting many people, and just connect with people. That is so different from me when I was younger….Not necessarily, because I felt sometimes I might have a lot of friends, but I still have my own little bubble. I don't know. It is kind of hard. ***Kate:*** Independent, free-thinker.	of pushes and pulls operate at a different stage that evoke different decisions. One can never undo the richness of the experiences gained by moving to another culture, even though one's initial reaction to those experiences may be ones of anger, disillusionment or heartbreak.
I7. Would you like to change anything about those descriptions you mentioned above? Who/what contributed the most to the change in the way you described yourself before you migrated and to your description of yourself now?	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: …but I have lived for so long with this notion of not-enoughness that this still sits with me very firmly. I can name each of the persons in the UK Clinical Psychology system who contributed to the description of myself as not-enough… ***Coenie:***Someone would say I had a bad experience with the accident…."he is more aggressive" because of all the injuries I have….I am sometimes negative about our culture or our traditions, not about our families, but maybe about the Afrikaners….sometimes I can get along better with them (Taiwanese)….They (Taiwanese) also don't have that ethic of [being] full of themselves. Naturally there are not only positive things…the bad smells. Every Saturday morning [they] start at 06:00 in the morning with their noisy religious rituals... ***Alina:*** . It's difficult to tell about. ***Heike:*** I think different experiences and different people around me changed me together with my emotional breakthrough –once I came to realise that I am able and worthy of change, I started to experience positive change and became happier in myself. I am happy I followed my dreams… ***Stella:***…I think that I need to find the right community to feel more belonged to in the country I live. I consider to volunteer for an organization for a good cause where it will give me the opportunity to meet others alike and feel that I offer something to	***Reflections:*** It seems that most of the storytellers had a sense of changing how they viewed the world, but that no one in particular specifically influenced those changes. It seems as if the storytellers embraced the opportunity to include new experiences into their lives in a way that aided them to make sense of their encounters in ways they preferred for themselves. I am wondering whether this aspect speaks to the resilience and tenacity these migrants adopted as a way to survive what could have been a less-desired way of going about life. I have often wondered whether migrants unwittingly go into migration from a position of 'not knowing' (Anderson 1997), much like a client and therapist do when they enter the therapeutic milieu? Are migrants thus possibly navigated by an intense curiosity that allows them to see the past as offering possible resources for enriching their lives? Does this curiosity permit them to embrace the new and diverse opportunities available to them to thus construct new meanings from the old understandings they carry with them? McNamee and Hosking (2011:26) remind us that we are 'self' in terms of how we relate to anyone or anything at any given time. As we relate to and with one another, relating is viewed as to be both ongoing and to construct stabilising effects. All the stories above

a disadvantaged. My own family has been my influence… ***Penny:*** No, life turns out the way it is meant to and it is for you to grow from those lessons. Circumstances are responsible for the changes. ***Phenyo:*** Many aspects of my personal evolution, the death of my friend Mpho, the pursuit of understanding life and her dynamics. The book with the most prolific impact on my life : Seat of the Soul. ***Jesse:*** It is just how/what I do. I open it up to people, but I don't like opening up myself like being this side [Jesse refers to being on the 'being interviewed' side]. I'm always on your side. This is difficult for me, really difficult, because I'm 100% on the other side, and never really ever on this side. ***Kate:*** Different cultures have preferences for different ways of being. I was certainly not considered naughty or rebellious in the States, in comparison with American children. I was considered polite. However when I started attending Swiss-German school I was considered rebellious and independent, they thought I didn't care about them.	tell of the latter – of going on together and of the stability sprouting forth from this merging.
I8. Are there times when you would describe yourself differently to the way you described yourself above? When would those times be and what would contribute to the descriptions about yourself that would be relevant at that stage?	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: At the moment the Truths that The UK Clinical Psychologists told about me are still very prevalent in my life….I start re-engaging myself with the Community Development work across Africa… ***Coenie:***…"he is more aggressive" because of all the injuries I have. But, if you don't focus on that the whole time, I think I am not as difficult as I was in the beginning. I also understand people in another, different way… ***Alina:*** It's difficult to tell about. ***Heike:*** I think everybody has low points and bad days sometimes –when I have a bad day, I certainly can be very stubborn and upset and not coping well with setbacks. However, these are short-lived. ***Penny:*** Yes, at night when I reflect on how I feel and often I don't feel as strong and capable as I project to the world. ***Phenyo:*** Yes perhaps there will be times, when other aspects may be more fitting to that above description however it does not mean that the above stray from the truth. However, it is more reflective of the fact that in different season some aspects of my being may be more evident. I am a deeply reflective being and at times struggle to articulate the measure of my perception with those around me in ways	***Reflections:*** It would seem as if the storytellers have a notion of moving around within their descriptions of themselves, but that these descriptions are not necessarily contained by their experiences of migration. It would seem as if the descriptions tell of persons thinking and evaluating life in general, without it being specifically influenced by the attributes of migration. Gergen (2009a:304-309) reminds us that we go about constructing who and how it is that we may think about ourselves through our interactions with others. We do not replace a non-preferred self(?) with another self(?) after we had moved away from a conversation, but we take away from the conversation those particularities that meld with our descriptions of our preferred stories. Two weeks before leaving for the USA, Tielman, Bianca and I went to Clarens for a 'good bye weekend'. To get to Clarens, one drives through the Golden Gate National Park. Some of the most beautiful rock formations form part of the spectacular scenery and the natural beauty of this region. As we were driving, the layers upon layers of soil sedimented through the ages in their variations of colour and density attracted my attention. I had a sense that the natural beauty, which I was witnessing, was a metaphor for

that can be understood and appreciated. This occasionally does arouse some level of frustration or sense of loneliness, but as I grow this is no longer a factor. I am no longer looking to be understood by all as I once was. ***Jesse:*** At some different time, I was different before, I guess. I got to be comfortable in myself. But, now I feel this is true all the time, because I don't only care when I'm around… ***Kate:*** I do think that I stand out in Switzerland for being "subversive." I do question formal authority and I do give feedback to people who do not think they should have to listen to my feedback.	what was happening in the motorcar between the three of us: we were depositing layers of conversation upon each other's lives. We would not be the same when we disembarked from our vehicle. We would not be the same after our weekend together. We had brought our dialogic selves to the weekend and we would go away from that weekend enriched by our interactions – in some infinitesimal way, each of us would not be the 'self(?)' who got into the motorcar on Friday afternoon. Someone I was working with in Pollsmoor Maximum Prison, in Cape Town, once said to me: "Margot, one has to change here. Never mind the other people in this place. Even if they put you in The Hole, you come out different." Our identities shift – even sometimes rapidly (Gergen 2009a:156). Migration is merely a contributing aspect, but *never* a causal one.
I9. Do you think different descriptions of yourself are true for you about yourself at different times in your life/day and when different circumstances prevail?	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: Yes, I do think that when I am with people that engage in the same language game as me, I see glimmers of myself as a person other than that which I have been described as during the past nigh on ten years. I know that when I am with my family and close friends, I am regarded as someone with an opinion worth taking into account. ***Coenie:***Yes, for sure. ***Alina:*** It's difficult to tell about. ***Heike:*** Yes. ***Penny:*** Yes. ***Phenyo:*** Yes perhaps there will be times, when other aspects may be more fitting to that above description however it does not mean that the above stray from the truth. ***Jesse:*** It could be the president, it could be my friend, it could be a little kid, and it could be a homeless guy. ***Kate:*** Yes.	***Reflections:*** As above, it is my sense that these descriptions the storytellers tell of are descriptions that would have evolved without the experiences of migration. It could be that some of the descriptions became more crystallised by the migratory experience. Yet, it would seem as if they would have been brought into being irrespective of migrating or not. This question was informed by having read Stuart Hall's, The question of identity, in *Modernity and its future* (1992:273-316). Hall is of the opinion that we have moved from a time where identity was viewed as static and bound to traditions and cultures, to a time where identity is seen to embody a more fluid way. Just as Derrida (1981 & 1986) argues for no fixed meanings to words or statements, Hall argues for no fixed identity within the entity bounded by its skin. Identity ebbs and flows and allows for the personal to be the political – the inside to be the outside and *vice versa*, exactly as the storytellers indicated above. The only fixed notion concerning identity, is the notion that nothing is fixed, but all is fluid and in the midst of the becoming...

I10. How would you describe your personal identity or sense of self after your stay in your new country? Would this description be different to how you would have described yourself before you migrated?	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: I would now describe myself as insecure, worthless, knowledgeless, not-enough. Before I left South Africa I was reasonably sure that I could quite comfortably conquer the world. Now I am fearful and afraid of being caught out and found wanting. Of not knowing. I am afraid people might think I am a fraud. ***Coenie:***Before the whole Taiwan-thing, I wouldn't get as mad at some of the things here in South Africa. But while I was away, and also the fact that I almost didn't make it, made me appreciate some people and some of the things more now that I am back in South Africa. You do miss your parents and the friends you had here in South Africa. I realize that you must enjoy your life every day. You must reward yourself with a few things…. Other people are important in one's life. What is nice about going through life alone? ***Alina:*** I am confused, of course, I would like to be more calm and more confident. ***Heike:*** I feel happier and satisfied with my new life. I feel that I am happy due to achieving my goals and thriving on new challenges. ***Penny:*** Difficult to say as I was a child so naturally there would have been a big change when growing into adulthood. I can't say if it was migrating or just natural growth. ***Phenyo:*** Yes, 8 years passed and a lot of seasons in my life and of course you evolve as a spirit, I changed, my life changed at the core I am still the same person, but perhaps at better peace with myself and my pursuit in this life. ***Jesse:*** My identity right now will definitely be to be like Jesus…..Religion is your own personal identity to people, I think…I could never be like just always having something to say, because I always feel that I should let someone else talk….I love it. I don't want to change it... ***Kate:***My sense of self … I think that the different experiences have allowed me to find a place where I feel comfortable with a lot of situations. I feel I have weaved an identity of Swiss-Anglo-American. Perhaps because I don't feel that I fit in perfectly in any one of the three countries, I feel it is more acceptable to tell people that my identity is a mixture.	***Reflections:*** I read the contributions of the storytellers above and I wonder whether, as with culture, identity is not a mixture of different things at different times. I wonder whether one does not often produce what is expected of one at any specific time. I think I would repeat about identity what it is that I had to offer regarding culture. I think we are a confluence of things and that we are able to discern whom we want to show under which circumstances. Identity evolves over time. Maybe we lose some bits and add other bits, but we keep evolving… As much as we represent our culture by the habits we show at specific times, we offer representations of ourselves of that which we deem appropriate at any given time. In short, we *perform* identity. What is offered during any performance, is (hopefully) in line with how we are choosing to be positioned, or are positioning ourselves. Identity is continually in the making. In our coming together to create meaning, we are being fashioned. Each day we contribute another layer to the discourse of 'me' already out there. We become more me, one conversation at a time, whether words are used or not …

D. ... and finally ...	
F1. Did we leave anything out that you would still like to have discussed during this 'conversation'? Please tell any other stories, which you think, are important and representative of the process of migration between countries.	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: I would have liked you to have asked me what I thought identity was. Whether I even thought there was such a thing as an identity. What would contribute to an identity and what would take away from an identity and whether one's identity could shift over time. ***Coenie:***No. ***Alina:*** No. ***Heike:*** I just also wanted to say that "validation" from my parents has been very important to me –my father never made any emotional statements when I lived back home. One day, after being here 2 years, he took me back to the airport and said "You know, I really like you!" I recall just crying and feeling very happy! ***Penny:*** No. ***Kate:*** No.	***Reflections:*** As I said in my initial answer (above), I would have liked to have had less general, more specific questions about my sense of what comprises identity. Gergen (2009b:1-30) introduces his readers to another sensibility. He argues that knowledge is a by-product of social relatedness. He does not see knowledge as an individual possession. He sketches the emerging dialogues - which take a stance of seeking the relational - and their implications for a Social Constructionist view of human interchange. He does not ask us to abandon traditional ideas, but only to think of them within different frames, which shift the emphasis and priorities so that they may invite new forms of inquiry. Upon reading this appeal by Gergen, I began wondering whether my attempt at, firstly, describing and secondly, inquiring into identity had been remotely successful? Were the storytellers left with a sense that they had a "fixed me locked somewhere inside them" which they were stuck with? Did the Story Guide leave them with a modernist preoccupation with "an identity," or "a self(?)"? Was the notion that we were engaging with a mere discourse that could transform (grow, shrink, morph, explode, be pliable or remain static at times, as well as so many other potentialities) as the relationships that surround us explore the apparent possibilities open to us?
F2. Can you think of any other questions that should have been included in this 'conversation'?	
Our Stories	***Reflections***
Margot: Possibly questions about how I think I could begin the process of re-describing myself if my description of myself had not been a preferable one and what it is that I would like that description to say. I think also a question about how I found the process of completing this Story Guide would have been useful. Also, whether completing the Story Guide had shifted any of the previous knowledges, thoughts and/or ideas I had held and what, specifically, had helped that to happen. ***Coenie:***No. ***Alina:*** If you want – we should to talk , maybe it be useful for you. ***Heike:*** No –this certainly was very thorough!	***Reflection:*** Questions bring forth answers. I wish I had asked more future-oriented questions. In hindsight, I wish I had had the opportunity to engage in conversations with each one of the storytellers *now,* at this very moment in time. It is my sense that the nature of the conversations would be quite, quite different. It would be acceptable to think that the 'new' questions would be informed by the answers from the storytellers and not pre-formed, as they are in the Story Guide. It is also my sense that, although there is much literature that substantiates and validates the use of e-mail interviewing, I would now, *post facto*, prefer to speak with each storyteller in person, over a

Penny: No. ***Jesse:*** I think it was good because I learned a lot of things about myself, and the reason why I feel a certain way about some of the stuff, because I'm not used to just talking about myself. It was helpful that you talked about your experience, because you clarified most of the questions. ***Kate:*** No.	period of time – to be able to ask questions that explore the possibilities inherent in each answer. I am wondering how this inquiry would have reflected the phenomenon of migration, if I had spoken to only one other migrant? Would my own story have emerged in the same way if I had spoken to only one other migrant? Would my story have emerged differently if I had not interviewed any one other person, but concentrated on a completely Auto Ethnographic inquiry? I am aware that the Story Guide did not even begin to mine the possibilities of the multiplicity inherent in each story. I walk away from the stories knowing that I had done my utmost with my tools and opportunities at hand, to walk the walk and the talk of the relational. In the words of Gergen (2009:372): "…no/thing truly or fundamentally exists for us outside our immersion in relational processes. Relationship stands before all." I had gone about this inquiry as relationally as my tools, time and physical distance allowed, yet I am experiencing an aching for a richer relational experience. Is that what it means to be truly relational? I wish I had asked more about the effects/experience of having completed the Story Guide …

C. CONCLUSION

"...Actually - there's not much I can say about the painting itself. My grandmother received a set of oil paints and art lessons for her 65th? birthday. She started out painting still lives and quaint seaside scenes. But at a certain point her work took an abstract and sometimes a symbolic bent....which she always explained as the chaos of the earth striving for the light. I seem to recall that the "your" work is dated '65 (i.e. 1965). Not sure if that last one is earlier or later....but I think they belong to the same thought-process and maybe they are close in time. Her name was Rose (Riss) Chasan - dates are 1890-1976. She immigrated to the US when she was a year old with her parents and 2 older brothers. She taught in the NYC public schools, and in her later years lived with my family of origin. She definitely helped to raise me."

Figure 7: ***'Migration ...'***

Mary Gergen gives the following advice:

> ...always keep a sort of a creative, rebel, spirited, backburner thing going that is alive in you. And if you have to conform to certain kinds of rules and regulations, you do it I guess... But, you keep alive and you be curious, and you look outside the limits of the field and you try to influence politically where you can. And join together and find others who might be interested in going in the direction you're going in... Be daring, but not foolhardy...
>
> Laura Ball (2010)

During the course of this writing about Stories of Migration, I have consistently endeavoured to keep a "creative, rebel, spirited way" of working at the forefront of my thinking. It is my impression that the people who so graciously took the time to complete the rather arduous Story Guide held a similar approach: for them to be agents of change, they had to say it like it was for them, even though it might not always reflect the *status quo* of society. It is my sense that often the storytellers were brave in their tellings, yet, at the same time, possibly cautious about the rebound effects of making their thoughts public. There might also be the possibility that those who engaged with me in the face-to-face conversations felt that they needed to be more circumspect in their tellings. It is often the nature of conversations, both social and therapeutic, to edit one's contributions more at first – for possibly three to four conversations – before moving into the more 'meaty' stuff. This is a kind of testing of the waters to see what will float and what will not. Various theorists explain this phenomenon in terms of trust and the rules of engagement which have to be created before any unabridged tellings can arise. So it was then that I found these first conversations about migration to possibly be of the sort where a lot of the

telling was being left untold – where a lot of the unsaid needed to be rescued from the said. Unfortunately the boundaries I had set for the writing did not allow me to venture into those conversations. Prior to engaging with both the email and face-to-face conversations, I had had various conversations with self(?) about how I was going to limit myself to *one* conversation per storyteller. Similarly, about how I would forego my usual way of engaging in therapeutic conversations which I knew I did not have the time or space to fully commit to. I was *very* aware that I could be stepping into an ethical minefield if I engaged with conversations with a more therapeutic bent. Expectations of further conversations - which I could not commit to - might well have been created and topics outside of the boundaries of this work might then have arisen and not been addressed. I wanted to remain an inquirer performing this inquiry rather than becoming a therapist performing therapy (McNamee & Gergen 1992; Sturgeon 2002).

In contrast, it seemed that those who engaged in their tellings via email were a fraction more forthcoming with their telling. Their editing of the telling was not as strict as those who were speaking with me. This could possibly be as paper (or the computer) is a less formidable judge than the bodily presence of another person might be perceived to be. But the email tellings, however, have more unanswered questions. Would it be fair to say, that although the unanswered questions were not as prevalent during the face-to-face tellings, their content might be of a more skirting nature? A possible "Yes" to a question that potentially elicited a far more extended story might be noticeable.

When I engaged with the prospect of this writing, I recall speaking to someone about my hopes and dreams for the outcome of the inquiry. I remarked on how the nature of qualitative inquiry was not about the seeking of answers to questions, but more about effecting change within the world. I believed that we effect change one conversation at a time and thus, if any of the conversations of this inquiry could affect one nano-change, I would feel that the labour had been justified. I was also rather brave in stating that if it came to be that I did not make any meaningful 'discovery' by doing this work, then, at least, I came to *that* conclusion. But right now, after having poured so much of my life into this project, I have to admit that I would be rather disappointed if that were the case!

As I go about the reading of McNamee and Hosking (2012), I find myself soothed by their assertion that research is an "everyday activity" (xiv) and that an inquiry situated within a Relational Construction-world makes place for "dissensus, complexity and multiplicity" (xiv). I have been worried since engaging with this work that it may be regarded as "shallow" and "not enough" as it does not explore into the furthest reaches of the topic. McNamee and Hosking (2012) foreground the relationships between the inquirer and the storyteller(s). They focus on the 'how' rather than the 'why' of an inquiry. I knew that I was not in a position to engage with the storytellers in a supportive role. I knew that I had to mine the complexities of their experiences in a safe way. I needed to find a way which would allow them to choose what to say and what not to say, so that they might go on with the confluences in their lives in a way that did not rip the scabs from wounds that had started healing, even though those same wounds might still be festering in some places. I wanted to protect myself and the storytellers from more unethical behaviour being perpetrated upon them by an unthinking inquirer who was only after the 'Truth' about a migrant's experiences. I know that when I step away from this inquiry, I will step into a place where I will create space for migrants to be supported and tell their stories across time and in a place of safety. How this is to happen, only time and circumstances will tell. All that I know now is that after the being with this inquiry, I will be better equipped to be with them in a way that they would prefer. I will be fully influenced by Thich Nhat Hahn in my being with the stories of migrants: "Those who are without compassion cannot see what is seen with the eyes of compassion" (1995:132). It is my desire to live the everyday nuances of life in a way that highlights the relational processes of my being-in-the-world and my going-on-together.

Maynes, *et al* (2008:4-5) reminds us that personal narratives are documents of social action and self(?)-construction. It would be prudent to remind myself and my reader(s) that by using the term 'self(?)', I am not referring to the 'self(?)' as a bounded being where the locus is internal and the place where everything about that person springs forth from. The 'self(?)' which I am referring to in this, and all other instances, refers to how I view my 'self(?)' and others as being in relation to each other and as to making meaning together whilst we are in relation to each other. I view the idea of a 'self (?)' as being un-bounded, non-bounded, de-bounded, but always in relation to the other, whether in a physical being together or in a thought-process being together. We are interactional beings and we bring our entire 'selves(?)' to these interactions, whether we are in 'conversation' with another person or in conversation with a written page.

The stories we tell about our 'selves(?)' and about our lives implement certain plots that we may regard as applicable at the time of the telling. Other plots may emerge when they tell the same story at different times. During the related stories, the plots about experiences of migration emerge. Had I asked different questions about migration, different plots or stories would quite possibly have emerged. It is in the conversation that meaning is made and the future of the conversation is co-created. Stories are not normally individual creations. They draw upon historically specific times and places and also on the rules and models of other stories in circulation – in other words, story elements are linked together in a temporal logic.

The stories told during this writing are examples of life stories. Life stories normally refer to retrospective first-person accounts of the evolution of an individual life over time and in a specific social context. For the purposes of this writing, personal stories refer to the interactions between the personal and the social. We are asking *how* the person is experiencing the migratory process rather than delving into *why* the person is experiencing the process that particular way. The *How* question allows us to understand the relationship between the person and the social context. Some stories "…are only accessible through intersubjective or dialogic processes…" (Maynes, *et al* 2008:4-9) which allow the stories to emerge within the emotional processes prompted by the interview situation in and of itself. Personal narratives contribute to the embodiment of our perceptions of how it is that we are in the world and how it is that we may prefer to be in the world. Our construction of how we view ourselves emerges over time and is constitutive of various memoried, unmemoried and dememoried aspects of our lives. In conversation preferred memories might be rememoried and unpreferred memories possibly rethought to allow for them to inhabit a more comfortable place in our lives. How we choose to populate our memories changes over time and may be influenced by the nature of the conversations in which we engage.

Culture plays its own part in how we memory and how we tell stories. I recall with great fondness sitting around the cooking fires with the earth-mothers. I prefer to think of the (black) women I interacted with as a young child on the farm as the earth-mothers of my life. It is a story of great sadness to me that I know I will not be able to return to these women to thank them for the influence they had on and in my life: they were mostly elderly at that stage and have all now certainly passed on to The Great Beyond. These women had never been to school. They could not read or write or add or subtract, yet they represented to me – then and especially, now – the deepest wisdom possible. They told the stories of their past in such a way that it was instructive to the young women at work around the cooking fires and at the river doing the laundry. They were my grandmothers. They were my life-tutors. They were my link to the earth. They were my love and I could not wait to listen to them storying their ways of being and understanding.

I hear stories now of how they were uneducated and underdeveloped and thus dismissible. Those tellings distress me. My earth-mothers were the wisest persons I have encountered in my life. They taught me forbearance and love, compassion and equanimity, to laugh and to cry with happiness and to play to my heart's content whilst learning how to live a life worthy of their being in the world. They taught me how to go on

together without judgement and prejudice. They taught me that colour, creed, race and class have no bearing on one's being. They taught me that we had a choice about how we wanted to be in the world. They taught me that to care and to love is the most important way of going about one's life. They taught me that caring and loving could take many forms and that that was acceptable. They were my earth-mothers. Now, sometimes, they come to me in my dream-time and teach me more about other wisdoms. They told their stories in different ways …

McNamee and Hosking (2012:49) are of the opinion that all inquiry can be viewed as "narrative or storytelling/making." Similarly, they consider narrative interviews and narrative analysis of interviews, written and spoken texts, including documents, archival materials, e-mails, telephone calls, films, magazines, etc., as examples of storytelling. The emergent narrative becomes a co-construction between the storyteller and the inquirer. It is important to bear in mind that every time someone interacts with the telling, the telling is re-constructed, regardless of whether the interaction is in the form of the transcribing of the telling, the reading of the transcription or the decisions about which parts of the telling to include in the analysis.

It is with this consideration in mind that I moved on to selecting from the stories told those themes and offerings which would allow us – myself, along with all the other storytellers – to make sense of this phenomenon called migration. I hope that the stories offered the possibility to represent the tellings, or sense making, in a way that is representative of power *with* rather than power *over*. Power *with* should allow us the possibility to re-story our experiences into preferred ways of looking at the incidents that populate our remembering of a certain time in our lives. It should also allow us to re-member these times back into our lives in a way that allows us other options for going on together and for being in the world in a preferred way.

> Conversation is, by its very nature ephemeral. After a particularly meaningful session, a client walks out aglow with some provocative new thought, but a few blocks away, the exact words that had struck home as so profound may already be hard to recall ….But the words in a letter don't fade and disappear the way conversation does; they endure through time and space, bearing witness to the word of therapy and immortalising it. A client can hold a letter in hand, reading and re-reading it days, months and years after the session.
>
> (Epston 1998:95)

By being able to hold our stories in our hands, we might make meaning of the relational processes we had intentionally and unintentionally formed part of and still form part of. We will abide in the knowing that we had written ourselves into being…

CHAPTER SEVEN

Making Sense of Sense-Making

"Understanding means
throwing away your knowledge."
Thich Nhat Hanh (Being Peace)

"A human being is like a television set
with millions of channels….
We cannot let just one channel dominate us.
We have the seed of everything in us,
and we have to recover our own sovereignty."
Thich Nhat Hanh(Being Peace)

A. INTRODUCTION

At the end of the Introduction to *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (1972:17), Foucault questions his recurrent questionings of his own positions. I find myself standing very close to Michel Foucault at this point, where I intentionally question the usefulness of my endeavours to produce this work. Whereas initially I was so clear in my own 'individualistic mind' about where this inquiry was going to lead, I now acknowledge that it has turned out so differently in so many ways …

The time has now come to valuate (McNamee & Hosking 2012:81) the writing that has gone before: the storying of lives led – often under great duress. This is the time to ask questions about the usefulness of the months of work that has gone into producing these pages. How we go into the valuation will differ for everyone. As we will be looking at the work - each with our own particular lens which has been formed by our own particular being in the world - no one truth will rule our valuations. Our own particular being in the world will be drawn from the many different stories we have heard about ourselves, told ourselves about ourselves and how it is that we put language to use in our own particular instances of life.

Laurel Richardson (in Richardson & Adams St Pierre 2005:964) is rather specific about how she evaluates a piece of qualitative research. I will use her criteria to valuate this inquiry narrative. I will discuss each of the four sections she names individually and assess how this inquiry narrative measures up. For Richardson, valuation requires inquiring into four aspects: (1) *Substantive contribution*: Does the writing add to our social understanding of life? Does the writing seem like a credible account of a cultural, social, individual or communal perspective? (2) *Aesthetic merit*: Does the writing succeed aesthetically? Does it leave you bored or does it invite you to want to know more? (3) *Reflexivity*: Is the author both inside and outside of the text? Is the author able to be part of the writing, but equally effectively reflect on the writing? (4) *Impact*: Does the writing affect you emotionally or intellectually? Does it create a desire within you to know more or to start writing yourself?

"The act of writing in itself begins a process of making the familiar strange and strange familiar….Observe, connect, create" (Anderson & Schlunke 2008:xxv). This sentence has haunted me since I first read it. It summarises my deepest desire: from my initial steps and throughout the creation of this narrative inquiry this question has remained at the forefront of my thinking. Have I managed to do this? Have I brought into being that which is every day in such a way that it has become both strange and familiar in a dance that excites and yields curiosity to see more, to hear more and to ask for more? Have I, in 'true' Foucauldian fashion, managed

to engage with both the archaeology and the genealogy (Scheurich & McKenzie 2005:841-868) of the topic at hand? Have I managed to maintain journalistic tension in the writing and thus kept the reader engaged?

My immediate sense is fear. What if? What if after all these months I have not come close to contributing to knowledge about migration? What if I did not represent the storytellers and their stories equitably and clearly? What if my representations of them fall short of the idea that representation is something within culture and language that represents shared meaning and is used to communicate shared understanding (Anderson & Schlunke 2008:262)? What if I was too inside or too outside the writing? What if readers engage in their reading and, after a few pages, respond with: "One Big yawn"? What if? What if? What if? What if it is good enough? What will my reaction be to that? Is my picture of myself as 'not good enough' *really* still alive and well and flourishing in my life? While I have had such a strong sense that the not good enough story has been put to bed by the writing, the writing must speak for itself, using its own measures and its own words. To guide me through this careful re-consideration of the writing I will use my own interpretation of Richardson's valuative criteria.

During the writing of this inquiry narrative, my mind frequently returned to memories of the surfing holiday I had shared with my son, Jacques, an avid surfer. I recalled how we toured Ireland together, just the two of us and his surfing kit. I sat in the front passenger seat - my head at an odd angle - as the surfboard had to be perfectly positioned so as not to be 'dinged'. (In surfing jargon 'dinged' means that a board has become damaged in some way.) Jacques' rationale was that while mother's head/neck could recover, his sacred board - one of about a dozen or more other boards Jacques owns - never would! I recall us stopping at many breathtakingly beautiful - but completely isolated - spots along the Irish coast. Jacques would don his wetsuit, wax his board, attach his ripcord, and, taking up his surfboard in the same fluid motion, would plunge into the waves. I relive the embodied sense of fear for my child's safety even as I write these words - goose bumps cover my whole body– an 'embodied memory' in the truest sense of the word. The Irish coast is rough and, on what surfers would call a "perfect" day, the waves are monsters. Or they seemed so to me - the mother of the lone surfer. But according to Jacques, the waves were "Sick, man, sick!" I remember sitting on these isolated beaches, watching my child out there on his board, in and on the waves. I remember the pride I felt as he rode the monsters - effortlessly and gracefully - until they petered out into little nothings. I remember thinking: "That is *my* boy! *My* baby. *My* child. Flesh of *my* flesh." And yet at the same time I was fearful beyond any description. "What if …?" permeated my every heartbeat and pervaded my being – even the sense of pride I felt so keenly. What if something happened to him? I am not a strong enough swimmer to rescue him. How will I save my child? We are *miles* from any form of civilisation. I sat on many beaches and on many rock outcroppings during the ten days of our Irish surfing holiday. I took many photographs of my son surfing – a tiny black spot on the horizon. I also recall evenings spent in the Irish pubs listening to my son speaking with the other surfers in a language quite foreign to his mother's ears. It was quite obvious to me that he was playing a Wittgenstein language-game perfect as he slowly became the centre of the gathering in the pub: he has that kind of way about him. In my mind's eye, I see him now: standing there, leaning with one arm on the counter, holding a pint of Guinness. In my mind's ear, I hear his South African-Australian lilt filling the airwaves with descriptions of waves and manoeuvres and inquiring about other 'good spots'. In this sketch I have offered you there lurks a certain kind of 'knowing': the memories of us breathing the same air, just being together, talking, laughing and comfortably being quiet, an unnegotiated rhythm settling into our days together. But as I sit here typing this story, I feel the other story in me welling up: the story of missing my son – I have not seen him for more than a year - and of the tears that are hovering and about to spill over.

In a very real way, this story of our Irish surfing holiday - and my ever-present desire to have my child within touching-distance - represents how I went about this inquiry. As I reflect now, I can identify various parts of this inquiry journey (just as the different parts of the Irish coastline stand out so vividly for me). There were parts that I could comfortably 'predict'; parts I had hoped for; parts I was terribly fearful of; parts that did not work out quite like I had foreseen; and there will always be parts that I wish I had done just a little differently. I know that, for a long time to come, I will want the writing to be within touching distance from me. I will miss it (as I miss my son) like a part of my body, as indeed it has been a part of my body for so long. I also know that an (e)valuation of how the inquiry turned out is a necessary part of the process.

I have often wondered how my readers will accept me populating my writing with my family. In my decision to locate myself and my family within the text, I have been guided by Ruth Behar's (2006:43) caveat that locating one inside one's own text "…is only interesting if one is able to draw deeper connections between one's personal experience and the subject under study." This has been my firm intention throughout.

There is a magnificent antique-looking World Globe in the Quiet Study Hall on the 5th Floor of the Dimond Library. When my energy flags, I go up to the globe, roll it around in my hands, and stroke the different countries where I would love to go: Vietnam, Tibet, Nepal, Indonesia, Russia, the South Americas, Antarctica… I often stand in the corner with the globe, hold it and mediate over it, beseeching the Universe for peace and prosperity for all sentient beings. My mind inevitably goes to what the world might have been like if there were no borders, if everyone was free to go where they wished. How could we make the world a wonderful place to live - with no war, no strife, no disharmony, no violence, no theft, no murder, and no deception? Would that even be possible? Would it be possible for migrants to go – much like the African nomads of eons ago – to places where they can eke out a living? There is so much hunger and violence in the world. Kon, Danielle's parents, Jesse and Penny - a quarter of the storytellers – had fled from war-torn countries. Jesse faced the ravages of genocide for most days of his young life. The man I saw at the traffic intersection in Pretoria fled from Mugabe's nightmarish rule in Zimbabwe. I will *never* forget that man. Never …. He changed my life. He brought me from an emotional death back to life – from numbness back to caring about humanity. He gave me my life back and he does not even know that. Where will I find him to tell him? Maybe at the same traffic intersection when I go back to South Africa at the end of the month? I think I will make it my job to find him … and thank him for my life.

B. LAUREL RICHARDSON'S VALUATIVE CRITERIA

1. Substantive Contribution

"Does this piece contribute to our understanding of social life? Does the writer demonstrate a deeply grounded (if embedded) social scientific perspective? Does the piece seem 'true' – a credible account of a cultural, social, individual, or communal sense of the 'real'?" (Richardson in Richardson & Adams St Pierre 2005:964).

Chapter Three discusses Social Construction and the way in which it explains the cultural, social, individual or communal sense of how I think about the world and the migration that is taking place in the world. I discuss eleven forerunners of Social Construction. Vico, Husserl, Schutz, Merleau-Ponty, Heidegger, Gadamer, Bakhtin, Vygotsky, Wittgenstein, Bateson and Kuhn have each contributed to Social Construction in their own way. Vico speaks to us about how history is the key to understanding human nature, along with comprehension of others and language. Husserl makes special note of experience and intentionality. Schutz tells of how we use the meanings stored in our consciousness to make sense of the world. Merleau-Ponty prefers to take the body and its memory into consideration. Heidegger was consumed by the idea of being. Gadamer desired to uncover human understanding. He also set a high value on languaging and conversational space. Bahktin deliberated on the philosophy of language. Vygotsky was enthralled by the inter-relationship of language development and

thought. Wittgenstein is famous for his notion of the language-game. Bateson is known for his postulation about cybernetics. Kuhn is probably most famous for his idea that science goes through paradigm shifts rather than flowing in a purely linear line.

Chapter Six offers the reader snippets from the conversations presented by the storytellers. Their stories are lived and representative of their lives and offer a glimpse into another way of life, one which is not usually spoken about in everyday discussions. They told their stories in an honest, vulnerable and open fashion. The storytellers all reported going away from the conversations – e-mail and face-to-face – with a different understanding of their migratory experience(s). But what does this inquiry inform the reader about social life? (Richardson & Adams St Pierre 2005:964)? It certainly informs us of some of the academic literature available on culture, migration and identity. But perhaps it would be more honouring and respectful towards the storytellers to present their perspectives of their interpretations about their migratory experiences in a purposefully and clearly represented way (Bruner 1991). Disregarding their observations might diminish the impact of the inquiry for future decisions regarding migration. What follows is a very condensed summary of the main points the storytellers addressed during their tellings:

- Arriving in a new country is hard and filled with various insecurities and stresses. New arrivals would have preferred to have had some support in the early days.
- The pulls to the destination countries were mostly about a better standard of life and personal safety.
- The pushes to migrating falls mainly into two categories: Safety-seeking and a better standard of life. It is interesting that both the pushes and the pulls of migration focus on the same aspects - safety and progress.
- Only Phenyo had made a definite decision about where he was migrating to. All the other storytellers had gone where circumstances had led them.
- The migrants' hopes, dreams and desires were about different aspects, but were focused mostly on safety-seeking and a better standard of life.
- Only Phenyo tells of how things were acceptable "at home" when he left his country of origin. All the other storytellers tell of how there were non-preferred aspects why they had left their countries of origin in the first instance.
- All the storytellers would migrate again. This aspect could contribute towards another inquiry about migrants: Is there a particular sense of resilience which supports migrants?
- All the storytellers, except Stella, speak of an initial culture shock when they arrived in their destination countries. Stella had had family who supported her in America. It was different for her when she arrived in England: she had no immediate family available here and experienced the loneliness and isolation of migration.
- All the storytellers tell how the cons of migration concern leaving their family and the familiar things, but that the pros are about experiencing new things and advancing in their professional/student life.
- All the storytellers think that the world migration authorities could do various things to make the processes easier and less expensive for all people.
- Most of the cultural aspects that the storytellers tell and remember are connected to religious and family ceremonies and habits.
- There are no central cultural influences that are standard for the storytellers. They speak of activism, baking, learning, social skills, siblings, etc.
- The storytellers described the new culture they had moved into as both difficult and easy, as well as strange and almost uninhabitable at times.
- All the storytellers speak of how they had absorbed things from each culture they had inhabited. They also tell of how they had experienced re-entry shock once they returned to a country in which they had lived previously.

- All the storytellers tell of belonging to their new culture eventually, although this belonging is of a different quality. The storytellers would mostly gravitate towards their 'own' people in their destination countries.
- The migratory experience helped the storytellers to understand that they are able to change, adapt and make their circumstances work for them.
- It seems as if the memories the storytellers hold about their destination countries are a mixed bag. At different times different memories would probably be memoried.
- Each storyteller has a story to tell of something they would not have achieved had they stayed in their country of origin.
- It would seem as if most of the storytellers described themselves as rather tentative when they set out on their migratory journey, but that they had overcome and made a success of their journeys.
- The storytellers tell of having gained preferable experiences by migrating – experiences they would not otherwise have had.
- The storytellers have different descriptions of themselves at different times, but by and large, they all report a moving forward of their lives, which they could not have foreseen had they stayed in their countries of origin.

The process of summarising the storytellers' responses has convinced me - more than ever - of the ways in which the majority of migrants enrich a destination country's economic and cultural health and wealth. This reinforces my conviction that consistent and determined attempts have to be made to convince world authorities that different measures regarding migration need to be considered. This is an assured way of benefiting the world and its inhabitants – both those inhabitants who stay and those who travel.

2. Aesthetic Merit

"Rather than reducing standards, another standard is added. Does the piece succeed aesthetically? Does the use of creative analytical practices open up the text and invite interpretative responses? Is the text artistically shaped, satisfying, complex, and not boring?" (Richardson in Richardson & Adams St Pierre 2005:964).

I hoped to produce an uncluttered piece of writing – one that would state: "*Here* I am. *This* is what I am saying." I like uncluttered writing and this is what I have tried to reproduce here. I would like to add the criteria of "uncluttered writing" to what Richardson calls Aesthetic Merit. I realise that inquiry is an obligation and that without inquiry the world remains small. I hope that my inquiry will allow the world to grow a tiny bit bigger. I know that there are currently in excess of 240 million migrants across the world. I have only spoken with 12 migrants. But I believe that these 12 migrants have brought stories to this inquiry narrative that will allow the reader to imagine what the life-world of a migrant could be like. Their stories are embedded with the feelings so peculiar to migration: feelings such as dis-familiarity, strangeness, often not understanding the language spoken, the constant reminder that one is different, the loneliness, the insecurity, the endless wondering whether you will ever see 'home' again, the missing of your family, your children, your friends, the fear of becoming a slave to the system as you are different and easily exploitable, the feeling of starting on the back foot. I hope that the way in which I have interspersed the academic with the personal will lend another aesthetic merit to the writing: that every reader will leave this inquiry narrative with a sense of "Ah, I think I understand a little more about migration and the trials and tribulations, victories and celebrations of being a migrant."

3. Reflexivity

"How has the author's subjectivity been both a producer and a product of this text? Is there adequate self-awareness and self-exposure for the reader to make judgments about the point of view? Does the author hold himself or herself accountable to the standards of knowing and telling of the people he or she has studied?" (Richardson in Richardson & Adams St Pierre 2005:964).

Richardson poses the question whether the author has been both a producer and a product of the text. This author has been both the producer and the product of the text. Without this text, I would not have been in the place I am now. When I left England one year ago I was a washed-up piece of human being. I had given everything I had to my employers and that was not good enough. I did not make the grade. I was an excellent worker, but I did not qualify in England. "So sorry." I wonder how many times I had heard those words during the years I worked in England? Today, I smile a big smile. I have not succumbed. I have written this narrative inquiry and I have found my healing in the writing. I have reclaimed my activist heart and I can face the world again. I have had the opportunity to sit with The People's Professor in her seminars and I have had the privilege to sit with the young people who populate her classes. I have watched those young people come alive under Professor McNamee's hands. I heard them speak about how they found bits of themselves that they did not know they had. I watched them, I breathed them deeply into my lungs and I was revived. I know the world is a good place to be. These young people make it a good place. They have hope, and they have life and they have courage. They will prosper, each in their own way. They are compassionate and real and they will make a difference in the world.

4. Impact

"Does this piece affect me emotionally or intellectually? Does it generate new questions or move me to write? Does it move me to try new research practices or move me to action?" (Richardson in Richardson & Adams St Pierre 2005:964).

"Does this piece affect me emotionally or intellectually? I know that I have cried many, many tears when I read the stories of the persons who had struggled. I know I cried many, many tears when I realised that my own healing was slowly creeping up on me. I was profoundly thankful that I was given another chance. After spending five months in Durham, New Hampshire, I know that it does not matter where I go in the world. I will be strong, courageous and full of vigour because I have my activist heart back. I know that I will care for migrants. I have ideas about how I might do it. I will rally other 'old' migrants to assist with the support of the 'new' migrants. I am hoping to contribute at least one article per week about migration to a tabloid. I am going to write a book about migration entitled *Migration. The Agony and the Ecstasy – A Workbook* which will accessible to the lay reader. The book will be based on the principles of Appreciative Inquiry, to enable the readers to envision their *discoveries* (valuate what is already working well), *dreams* (imagine what could work well in the future), *designs* (planning and prioritising processes that will work well) and *destinies* (the implementation of the proposed plans). Please see below for more inquiry questions this writing has unearthed for me.

C. MARGOT's VALUATION

Laurel Richardson's valuative criteria are demanding. Although I find myself being rather nervous about not measuring up, I am pleased nevertheless that I have attempted this feat. I would like to add further thought-provoking and salient points to Richardson's four criteria. These criteria do not fit under specific headings, but have emerged rather randomly from the body of the inquiry narrative:

- Those storytellers who had e-mailed me their stories seem to have felt free to describe their tales of migration in greater detail than those with whom I had had face-to-face conversations. It would seem as if the computer is a less intimidating presence than another human being.

- All the storytellers – including myself – reported that they had not suffered any lasting disadvantage to what is generally referred to as 'identity'. When I set out on this project, I was convinced that all the storytellers would report that they had suffered significant trauma and had thus started to question their self(?)-hood during their migratory process. It seems as if all the storytellers who took part in this inquiry narrative are not inhibited by a bounded being (Gergen 2009a). A logical conclusion might be that all the storytellers managed to rise above the circumstances that had prevailed for them. This does not mean that all migrants will report the same experience. Perhaps we can assume here that if migrants were treated in a drastically more harsh way, they might indeed report different meanings to their experiences.
- I have remained attentive during the course of the inquiry narrative that I was writing as a feminist writer. For me, writing as a feminist means to be equitable, fair, non-pejorative, non-subjugating, honest, open, reflexive and accountable. I cannot hide when writing what is significant to me. To do so would stand against my ethical position: I am a feminist and a woman.

D. DEFINITIONS

In chapter One – Hopes, Dreams and Desires - I undertook to offer definitions of Culture, Migration and Identity. During my pondering about the definition that I would eventually offer for Migration, I realised that it seems as if Migration also has the possibility of offering a non-definition. You will find yourself at a loss to find an adequate definition or a concise explanation for Migration unless you do delve into the migratory typologies (Cohen & Jóhnsson 2011). But the migratory typologies do not explain Migration. I thus have to accept the fact that I am unable to offer much more than rudimentary propositions as definitions for all three the concepts I have been using during this inquiry narrative.

1. Culture

Culture develops from the traditions of relationships and becomes rooted within a group of people in a way that would allow the label of 'culture' to be ascribed to those relationships. These relationships are evidence of the inter-pollination between different peoples and groups. The members of the culture share food preferences, behaviours, attitudes, values and beliefs, ways of communication – art, dance, music, gestures, dress - traditions and celebrations. Culture is a unifying factor that gives identity to a group and aids belonging. Culture assists us to make sense of our embodied everyday life. It allows us to make ethical sense of our lives and environment and to effect change in the world.

2. Migration

A migrant is a person who stays out of his/her usual country of residence/birth for more than one year. According to International Organization for Migration, no universally accepted definition for a migrant exists. The United Nations defines a migrant as an individual who has resided in a foreign country for more than one year, irrespective of the causes (voluntary or involuntary) and the means (regular or irregular) used to migrate.

The rather thin definition I am offering for migration underscores the desperate need for a worldwide re-consideration of the *whole* issue of migration. Migration has existed as long as the planet earth has been habitable. The artificial measure fabricated to control the free-flowing of humans has indeed contributed too much acrimony across the world.

3. Identity

Identity emerges as a fluid, provisional, and specific telling at a specific time - this implies an arbitrary beginning, middle and ending to a story. How a person views him-/herself(?) at any given time, will come forth in the

telling. No 'identity description' is ever the same across two conversations. Identity-descriptions are of a more non-bounded and fluid nature than individuals realise:

> I want to begin by proposing boldly that, in effect, there is no such thing as an intuitively obvious and essential self to know, one that just sits there ready to be portrayed in words. Rather, we constantly construct and reconstruct ourselves to meet the needs of the situations we encounter, and we do so with the guidance of our memories of the past and our hopes and fears for the future. Telling oneself about oneself is like making up a story about whom and what we are, what's happened, and why we're doing what we're doing.
> (Jerome Bruner 2009:56)

E. FUTURE RESEARCH OPTIONS

- Would it be useful to inquire into the possibility of ascertaining a more durable description of migration, culture and non-bounded identity?
- Would it be easier for younger children/persons to migrate than older persons and what would make it so?
- Why would some second-generation children choose to break with family traditions whilst others insist on clinging to them? Would inquiry into this phenomenon help us understand the notion of migration?
- How does one select and deselect memories pertaining to adverse circumstances? How does one make sense of the non-preferable happenings in one's life?
- What allows a migrant to embrace well-being and personal growth rather than heartache and detachment? Would inquiring into this topic be useful to help migrants settle in the future?
- Why do some people migrate and why do others not?
- How do the persons left behind in the home country cope once the migrant has left? How do the stay-behind family members react towards each other once a person central to the family has left?
- How many migrants would rather have remained in their countries of birth than migrating? Would inquiring into this aspect help to understand the trauma migrants endure when they first arrive in a strange country?
- Would it be useful to inquire whether migrants would settle in their destination countries more readily if they had a conversational partner or a local support network?
- Would the opportunity for migrants to engage with an Appreciative Inquiry Summit be beneficial for them in terms of their settling down process?
- Would it be possible to engage the International Office of Migration and the United Nations in discussions about how migration might be done differently?
- How do persons acculturate? What contributes and what detracts from acculturation?
- How much of the migratory process is a money-making process and how much of the process is *really* necessary?
- What is belonging? What contributes to or detracts from belonging?

F. REFLECTING ON THE AIMS OF THE INQUIRY

During the course of Chapter Five (Please see Chapter Five, pg. 146, above), I stated that I had three main aims for situating this inquiry. First, to inquire into my own understanding of how I was affected by my migratory experience and, hopefully, to draw some healing from the process of this inquiry. Second, to invite other migrants to tell their stories of migration and to ascertain whether their migratory experiences had affected how they think of themselves now. And third, I hoped to write their stories in such a way that it would benefit others they might encounter during their migratory processes, whether these were other authorities they would inevitably have to confront, or employers, colleagues, and new friends, etc. An ancillary aim of the inquiry was what a social constructionist inquirer would regard as taken for granted: to effect change.

As I reflect on these aims and on whether I was successful in attaining them, the following becomes evident:
Aim One: I cannot overestimate how usefully I have been influenced by writing this inquiry narrative. With every passing day my amazement increases regarding how much the process of bringing this narrative inquiry into being has enabled me to draw healing for those unenviable situations I had encountered. I know that I will be able to look back at the writing and draw from it in times to come in ways that I prefer and that I find useful. I would have to conclude that this aim was reached.

Aim Two: I wanted to hear from other migrants whether their experiences of migration echoed mine and whether their migratory experiences influenced the way they saw themselves(?). Although all the story tellers had different experiences - some more preferred than others - we all came away from our involvements as migrants with a situated sense of how we see and experience ourselves(?). Even though not all the story tellers would necessarily want to relive all the specifics of their migratory experiences, it seems that they would migrate again, should the opportunity arise. All the story tellers view themselves as people with more knowledge about themselves and with experiences that have enriched their lives. It would thus seem that this second aim has also been reached in a preferred way.

Aim Three: As this aim has to do with future directed actions, it is only in time that I will be able to evaluate whether it has indeed been reached. I am committed to making this aim a reality, even in the smallest way. I am thus hopeful that, when I look back in two years' time, I will be able to say that this aim was also reached, even if the reaching only affected one other person. I now understand what my advisor, Sheila McNamee, meant when she cautioned me that change takes place slowly, "One conversation at a time" (see above page 58).

Ancillary Aim: The accepted aim of effecting social change hangs together with Aim Three. It is only in the future that one will be able to look back and evaluate whether this aim was reached to a greater or lesser degree. The twelve people who shared their stories with me, however, told me how meaningful they had found speaking of their experiences in a different way. This process helped them to think about migration in a way that enabled them realise that they carry abilities and strengths that they had not thought about or recognised before completing the Story Guide. They also found it helpful to realise that their particularities were grounded in their familial and societal culture and that this had supported them during the lonely times. This ancillary aim has thus been realised, although not in the way that I had thought of initially. I had hoped to effect change in the broader society and in governmental departments. The hope remains, though, that the inquiry will reach into the broader community and society to effect change on a larger scale.

G. CONCLUSION

> We cannot move theory into action unless we can find it in the eccentric and wandering ways of our daily life…. [Stories] give theory flesh and breath.
>
> (Minnie Bruce Pratt 1995:22)

I have reached the last stage of this inquiry narrative. I sit in front of my computer with more than a tinge of sadness. During these past months this writing has inhabited so much of my life. I am afraid to say goodbye to it. I feel overwhelmed by the amount of words I have produced. Stacy Holman Jones (2005:764) likens Auto (Relational) Ethnography to a balancing act. Because it writes about a world in flux and movement, it works to hold self(?) and culture together, although not in equilibrium. It is this delicate act that creates moments of creativity, clarity, connection and change.

As the title of my inquiry narrative is *Stories of Migration: From Here to There and Back …and the Stuff In-between* it is only right that I say something about the In-between. Whilst walking to the Library this morning I was pondering why I prefer to call myself an 'In-Betweener' rather than an 'edgewalker'. I have always been an In-Betweener and I adore being an In-Betweener. Being an In-Betweener provides me with so many freedoms and allows me so many eccentricities. I can slip in here and there and everywhere and be at home wherever I earth myself. Maybe, just maybe, we are a family of In-Betweeners! Dwight Conquergood (1991:184, authors italics) tells us that "meaning is contested and struggled for in the interstices, *in between* structures." I recall my beautiful Bianca when we were last in Mozambique. We stayed in a house right on the beach. The local market was less than three minutes away. One morning I walked to the market for something or other. I heard a huge merriment in the middle of the market. I was magically drawn to the joy. There was my child, flat on the red ground, with about 12 young boys around her. She with her blond head and them with their dark heads – a perfect collage of ecstasy in the moment. They were conversing, each in their own language, but they understood each other perfectly! The bubble of bliss they had created had drawn many others to their little convocation. She had slipped in in-between those young boys and had them organised in a jiffy! What a magical parade to watch. They were her firm and fast friends until we left four weeks later. They were very, very sad when she left. My In-Between child was practising something of the alchemy of this position:

> Recognize the power of having it "both ways", of insisting on the interaction of message and aesthetics, process and product, the individual and the social. Recall how the crises, turns, and movements in and toward narrative, performance, and social protest theatre are generated in the radical possibilities that exist in these in-betweens. Make work that struggles to open up the space between analysis and action, and pull the pin on the binary oppositions between theory and practice.
>
> (Hollman Jones 2005:784 in Conquergood 2002:145)

The constructionist challenge to blur the disciplinary boundaries remains. Our ultimate welfare lies in talking together in a kind of dialoguing that allows multiple values and realities to intersect: "…Relational Constructionism assumes that many simultaneous inter-actions continuously contribute to the processes of constructing reality….[O]ur interest is in how ongoing relational processes construct and re-construct local ontologies as forms of life" (McNamee & Hosking 2012:39). In the relational lies the possibility of going on together in a meaningful way – in a way that allows possibilities to develop and expand.

In this, my last paragraph of this inquiry narrative, I feel that I have to say something of magnificent import – and yet I have no idea what this could be. All I know at this moment is that which is burning in my heart: I want to shout out to the world that I have found back my activist heart; I have reclaimed it and *no one* is going to take it from me again. From now on, I will fight the fight of the migrant wherever I may find myself in the world. You see, I remember that man at the traffic intersection in Pretoria…

after...

"Root out the violence in your life,
and learn to live compassionately and mindfully.
Seek peace.
When you have peace within,
real peace with others is possible."
Thich Nhat Hanh

It is now three and a half months since I landed at Oliver R. Tambo Airport, in Johannesburg, South Africa, after leaving from London Heathrow Airport. ***I am now living the after...*** When I initially decided on this chapter as the closure to my work, I had envisioned it containing the reflections on the writing process with which I am currently engaged. This chapter will eventually also include such reflections. For now, though, this first part of the chapter has to be a journal of some sort: a journal that reflects how I am managing the not belonging. Fortunately for me, journaling fits with Relational Ethnography. I also have to close the brackets I introduced when writing the **before**….

In reality, the **after…** began for me when I got back to London from visiting my friend Gita in Ottawa. I visited her after I had watched the Royal Wedding on 29 April 2011 and before I returned to South Africa on 30th May 2011. Before leaving for Canada, I was caught up in last minute arrangements, concluding outstanding affairs, packing and making arrangements for my travelling. I was still infused with the adrenaline rush I experienced each time I thought of how I no longer had to cope with facing Mr. XX and his discriminatory practices each day. The two weeks between getting back from visiting Gita and leaving for South Africa actually marks the beginning of the **after…**. This fortnight marks for me the start of the pain I experienced of leaving a country where I had, seemingly, always wanted to live. The first time I had visited London was with my father in 1975. I felt at home immediately. I must admit that at that time I was an eighteen year-old holiday maker. Things are rather different when you have to work for a living in a country; besides, much had changed during the intervening years – for England and for me. And yet, in spite of all the harshnesses I experienced in England, on reflection, I realised that I was happy living there. After nearly ten years, England was familiar to me.

I read and re-read the **after…** often, wondering whether it has a place in this dissertation as it has no academic standing, *per se*. At the time of every reading, I come to the conclusion that I cannot discard the **after…** as more than any other part of this dissertation, it speaks to me of the longings, pain, joy, hardships and victories of migration. I consult with many 'consultants' (Keilley & Piercy 1999), both academic and non-academic, about whether or not I should retain the **after…** as part of my dissertation. Most thought that without the **after…** the dissertation would be profoundly poorer in its ability to bring home the realities of living a life in-between. I realise that the **after…** is not a chronological account of my experiences as they relate to migration, but rather an intersecting mishmash of the memories as they present themselves. Maybe it is this way of presenting the **after…** that allows it to speak to heart of the matter: namely, that this thing of migration and being an in-betweener is *not* a predictable phenomenon that one can control at each junction. It is a thing of emotionality and flux: coping some of the time and not coping at other times. Of eventually remembering what was good more often than remembering what was not so good. Of thinking again and again and again about the pushes and the pulls that got you to pack your suitcase in the first instance. And tugs you back to considering the

redoing of the same thing again … repacking your suitcase, saying your goodbyes and having the flutters of expectation all over again …

When I was a little girl, older people used to refer to the descendants of the 1820 British Settlers, who mainly populated the area where I grew up, as 'Salt Dicks'. I did not know what it meant then, nor would anyone explain it to me because I was "too young." And now I am a Salt Dick myself. I eventually found out its meaning: when you have one foot on one continent and another foot on another continent you become a Salt Dick. I also recall when many of the white people fled from Rhodesia after it became Zimbabwe. Many of them settled in the Eastern Cape where I grew up because they had relatives living there. These ex-Rhodesians were nick-named "When Wes" by the locals because they would start each sentence of reminiscing about Rhodesia with "When we ...." Now I am a "When We" myself. I wish I understood then what I understand now about being a Salt Dick and a When We. Maybe I would have been much kinder towards my fellow(wo)men and their children, who were my friends. I acknowledge that I did not treat them with compassion and acceptance, as one friend to another: I often simply echoed to my friends what I had heard the grownups saying.

My cases are on the floor in the bedroom that I inhabited during my last days in London. On top of my handbag Dom has left a book for me. I sit and I stare at the pile of cases I have to lug to the airport, and at Dom's present. I feel her love, her kindness, her compassion and her understanding. I feel completely torn. I know she knows this. A single tear, uninvited, courses down my cheek. It is followed by another and yet another. Silence. I hear someone in the passage. The footsteps stop at the door to my room, someone steps half inside, and then retreats, closing the door softly and leaving me be and allowing me to be sad and torn and confused. A teeny weenie, rather sardonic, smile plays across my face, disrupting the tears somewhat: I wonder what is going to happen now to my belief that I had been an English queen in a previous life? Maybe I will still come back to claim my right to the throne! Who knows ...

And then the madness starts. The car has arrived and we have to leave for Heathrow Airport. I am flying to South Africa with an airline that allows me two bags of 23 kilograms each to be checked into the hold. I have a backpack that I carry as a handbag. I also have a carry-on case containing the books I decided I *really* couldn't do without for the eight weeks it will take for the container carrying my earthly possessions to arrive by sea. We cannot fit my luggage and all the good-byers into the car. We pack and repack. We all end up with something on our laps – one of us with another human being! We leave for Heathrow Airport. The traffic is typically London: congested. For once I don't mind. It allows me more time before I have to hand over my passport and e-ticket. I try to absorb every sight, every sound, every landmark and every smell as if my life depends on it. I take mental pictures to store in my Forever Folder.

At Heathrow Airport I have to negotiate weighing in my luggage. The gods of over-weight baggage are with me. I get both suitcases checked into the hold. I carry my backpack and I push my carry-on case, my entourage faithfully following me. I ask the good-byers to please leave. I run. I don't allow them to touch me. I see their lips moving , but I can't hear their words. I fall, tripping on the wheeled carry-on case. Someone tries to help me up. Now I'm sobbing loudly – uncontrollably: "Leave me alone. Please, leave me alone." I go through check upon check upon check – luggage, sharps, shoes, belts, carry-on luggage weight, passport, boarding pass – it seems unending. The gods of over-weight baggage are still with me. I navigate and I negotiate. All happens in a state of near-oblivion. I remember to buy Krispy Kreme doughnuts for my child.

My soul is screaming so loudly that I expect at any moment to be apprehended for public disturbance of the peace. "Do I want to do this? Do I want to go? What will happen to me once I get there?" The screaming continues on and on and on inside my head. Eventually I am seated and the airplane takes off. As it circles over London, I begin to shake and feel nauseous. I can't sit. The tears are coursing down my face like rapids. I am going to be sick. I heave. The person next to me is really concerned. He calls the flight attendant who tells me to be still - we are in the process of taking off - but brings me a bottle of water. I cling to the armrest, my face flat against the window as I watch London fade away. All of it. I am in such emotional agony that I am convinced I am having a heart attack. Eventually I get a remote sense of control over myself. I sleep fitfully, dreaming of hands grabbing at me. During my waking periods I decide the dreams are referring to my unrealised English ambitions. The man next to me keeps talking to me, endlessly, whether I am asleep or awake. He is quite probably petrified of having to act as a helpless witness to another emotional breakdown.

I am flying via Addis Ababa. We stop over for two hours. I order breakfast. I gag. I can't eat yet. I leave the restaurant. The whole checking and weighing ritual repeats itself *again*. Still the gods of over-weight baggage remain with me. I duck and dive, walking purposefully past any possibility of being stopped and my carry-on luggage weighed. A kind of numbness has now settled over me. My neighbour on the last leg of the flight to South Africa is a delightful young Indian man from a very poor village in India coming to Africa to do volunteer work. The irony does not escape me. He is a financially supported student at Berkeley University, Florida, USA. We speak about studies and volunteer work. Slowly, very, very slowly, in my speaking to him, my soul starts to soothe itself.

I start thinking about the other side. South Africa. We have two and a half hours of flying-time left. I feel a tiny little jump in my heart. I smell my Bianca's hair. I feel her perfect skin under my fingers. I smell her perfume. I hear her laugh. I see her smile – those beautiful, brilliant white teeth exploding from her lips when she smiles her smile that always reaches her beautiful green eyes. I *know* she will have balloons for me. I *know*. I imagine her sharing her balloons with the little ones also waiting for mummies, daddies, grandparents, family, friends, anybody, to arrive. I suspect she will be wearing some form of rugby jersey or t-shirt. My girl. One of the main reasons I decided to cross the waters. I can hear her bugging her Dad: "Can we leave *now*? *Please*, can we leave *now*?"

I can feel his reassuring arms around me. Somehow the world is always a safe place when his arms are around me. He is a big man. I fit under his chin. I can feel him resting his chin on the crown of my head, like he always does when he hugs me. I can see his smile, as well. His lop-sided grin. I can spot the happy, relieved wetness in his eyes. He is happy to have me home. Yet, there is some nervousness, too. How will we make it work after almost two years of living apart? Living with my mother-in-law? The thoughts dive-bomb through my mind. Good thoughts. Happy thoughts. Comforting thoughts. Some anxious thoughts.

But ... *where* is home? I don't know. I don't know. I DON'T KNOW. Home is where your heart is; home is where you hang your hat. Really?

We disembark at O R Tambo Airport. I am separated from my Indian friend. The numbness renews its hovering presence over me. I stand in the SA Citizens passport queue. I get to the front. I hand over my passport. The custom official scrutinises it. He swipes and stamps my passport. The young black man looks up at me. He smiles one of the most beautiful smiles I have ever witnessed and says: "Welcome home, Ma'm!" The tears explode spontaneously from my eyes. Such unexpected kindness. He looks at me quite quizzically - dumbfounded - and responds: "Eish, it's OK. It's OK."

I move on. Up and down endless escalators. I get to the baggage rotunda. My Indian friend is already waiting. He sees me, smiles gently and says: "Don't worry, it will be OK." Sniffer dogs circle the passengers constantly, creating nervous glances all around. We wait for what seems like hours for the baggage to arrive. I am convinced mine won't arrive – it's been lost in transit. I am sure it has. Bags come and bags go. My Indian friend collects his bags. We hug. I tear-up, again. He leaves. He has a pick-up waiting. My bags don't arrive. For the longest time there are no bags being spewed forth from the nether world below the rotunda. I panic. But then I see others waiting for their bags too; panic gives way to hope. I am reminded of Bianca's consistent warning: "T-I-A. This is Africa." Time has little meaning.

Suddenly a bag of the brightest pink flowers explodes onto the rotunda. "Yes, Yes, Yes!" If one of my bags has successfully completed the journey, the other one would surely make it too. The fact that my pink suitcase had obviously been vandalised – a broken lock and a broken zip – is of little importance at that precise moment. I collect my second bag. I try to load the bags onto the trolley which refuses to stand still. A man helps me. I thank him and I become paralysed. I can't move. What if they are not here? What if they forgot to fetch me? What if they don't actually want me here? What feels like hours pass. I can't move. The baggage reclaim area is empty. It is only me and my trolley stacked with bright cases. What if? A lady comes towards me, a worried look on her face. I experience every nuance as if in sharp relief, yet slowed down to zero. Her approach prompts me to move. I don't want to do any explaining to anybody. My mouth is so dry that my tongue won't move. Talking would not be physically possible anyhow. I recognise that I have engaged with what the world of psychology calls "dissociation". I recognise how I feel and I realise that I have to pull myself together. For all our sakes.

Slowly, very slowly, I start to push the trolley towards the exit. In my dazed state I ignore the customs officials and I mechanically follow the green line: No goods to declare. In front of me are the sliding doors to the waiting area. They open. I stand: statue-like. I hear a DNA-piercing yell: "*Mamma, mamma*!" (Mummy, Mummy!) My daughter careens at me, a zillion balloons flying behind her like bright splashes on a moving canvas, disregarding any other being in her wake. We grab a hold of each other. We laugh. We cry. We touch. We kiss. We hold. We dance. I smell her hair. I bury my face in it. Her father respectfully gives her the chance to say her hellos. He comes towards me and wraps me in his arms, a wetness in his eyes and the ever so slight trembling of his mouth he manages to partly disguise. He says: "*Welkom tuis, my lief*." (Welcome home, my love.)

We move quickly into the phase of the manic telling about incidents connected to my flight, their drive to the airport and their waiting for me to come through the doors. I took so long that they had started wondering whether I had bottled out! We push the overloaded trolley along, load my luggage into the car and set off onto the journey staring my new life. Near hysteria threatens to make itself visible. I push with all my might and it remains below the surface, my face mask-like in its apparent happiness and obvious fatigue and my voice from another dimension. I hear their voices as if below water – distorted. Bianca holds my hand all the while.

We drive home. I find myself back in the waking dream I experienced when I came for my holiday in December, five months before. So much is different and yet so much is familiar. What is real? I tell myself to relax. It is all *just* due to jet lag. I will soon be fine. I acknowledge that the 'becoming fine' process really only started on the following Sunday. But at the time, driving home felt more like a trip on a ghost train with under-worldly tendrils swirling around my being than a triumphal return.

We get home. My bed is covered in beautifully wrapped "Welcome Home, Mummy/Wife" gifts. Each gift tag speaks of love and welcome. Each gift specifically selected to make my new life easier and to confirm the sentiments of love, caring and happiness. I am touched. I have no gifts to give in return. I could not go about buying gifts during my last days in London. That very action was too final. I absorb the sense that for this

minute it is about me and I go along with it. I became even finer as the week progresses. On the Sunday, one week later, on my birthday, Bianca had organised a surprise birthday party for me. *All* Tielman's family were there to welcome me home. Even my sister-in-law - my friend - frail from the ravages of leukaemia. How good could life get? So much love. Such welcoming...

Yet, there is a missing. A missing of my own blood: my son. The son of my heart. Australia is so far from Africa. So very, very far for a mother to be away from her only son. I feel the absence of my beloved godchild and her children – my god-grandchildren. I long to hold them. To hug them and bury my face in the baby smell of our new little boy. To hear about the stories to be told. I know I have to be patient. I will see them soon. I try my best. I succeed somewhat. The party ends when we are gently exited from the restaurant. Lingering good byes and good lucks all around in the car park. Extended last minute sentences spoken – a sense of no one wanting to disconnect there and then. Of wanting the now to last just a bit longer. I remember reading somewhere about how different cultures say goodbye.

All this love, and yet I am enveloped by the ever-present knowing that tomorrow starts a new phase in my life – I am a student again. A Ph.D. student. What exactly does that entail? Will I fit under the umbrella of dependency after having been a free agent for so long? A smell of personal guilt lingers in the air around me. Vistas of Ungratefulness burn the insides of my eyelids and scorch the cells of my brain: "How dare I think the thoughts alive in my mind? How dare I? All I've seen, heard, experienced has been love, love, love and more love?" Still the not-knowing gnaws like hungry rats at the periphery of my consciousness. I admit: "I am scared: petrified beyond conceptualisation. I am here, but I don't *really* belong ..."

And then, on the Monday, real life starts with a bang: with cymbals clashing and African drums pounding. I realise I had been cosseted for one whole week of dis-reality. I am completely alone at home for the first time since I arrived back one week before. No public transport. No personal transport. No mobile phone contract. No internet. No salary. Only the barest minimum of personal belongings. Clothes limited to what could fit into a suitcase. Clothes which I had been wearing continually for the past six weeks whilst travelling. Where do I place my computer to best facilitate writing a Ph.D. Dissertation? Where do I place my books? How does the TV work? How does the stove work? Am I allowed to cook? Where is the supermarket? How does the money work? What do the notes represent? What do the coins represent? What is cheap? What is expensive? How do I order books from Amazon? Is eBay an option? When is it going to rain? How should I dress? Where do I find the foods I can eat on my food intolerance diet? Why is everyone telling me to be cautious? Why won't they let me walk anywhere? Why do I have to live behind security bars and security gates that are locked and unlocked with a sense of hyper-vigilance? How do I negotiate living with my mother-in-law? Why is there this constant blaring of car horns wherever one drives? Never ending, nerve-jangling car horns. What does the concept 'home' refer to?

I don't belong. I don't belong. I don't belong. It's only been one week. Be patient. I don't belong. I don't belong. Be patient. It doesn't smell like my home. I don't belong. I don't belong. I don't belong. The tears are stuck somewhere in my soul. I have to belong. I have to belong. I have to belong. Grow up. Get a life. Suck it up. You are a big girl. You are acting like a spoilt brat. I have to belong. I have to belong. I have to belong ... for *everybody's* sake. So ... I start belonging ... for *everybody's* sake. My mouth speaks belonging, but my heart knows: I don't belong. My mind asks: So then, where *do* you belong? I can't answer the question. I decide, for sanity's sake: I am a world citizen. Stop the blabbing. I stop the blabbing. The blabbing becomes tired, old, boring. I stop the blabbing. I've sucked it up and put a cork in it. I've stopped the blabbing. On the outside ...

... and from afar - from somewhere in my consciousness deadened by this Kafkaesque obliteration of the boundaries between the real and the good and the confounding - awareness sets in. I hear the bell tolling for me. It tolls "Get real. Get real. Get real" until I want to pull the hearing from my ears. I am so very comfortable in my place of woe. Here there is self-knowledge; self-acceptance; an expectation to *not* fit in. Yet, somehow, in their Tiggerish exuberance the stupid FACTS keep jumping up and down, waving happily like the larger-than-life characters which prowl the streets of Disneyland. I open the door to reality check them ever so slightly; to shoo them away once and for all and to sternly admonish them to "Go away and *leave me be.*" A vanilla-like smell perfumes the air and creeps in the crack of the door. I know that I am purposefully dis-awarenessing the good stuff. I have grown quite fond of the pain of not-belonging. It gives me an excuse for every mood and unmood – it allows me the freedom to sulk and skulk that I have never had before: I revel in it. I oscillate between my newly acquired lugubrious face and my usual happy face. I keep everyone around me in suspense as to who is around this time. Am I, just possibly, trying to control the seemingly uncontrollable? Am I staking my claim; putting a marker in the ground? But ... the vanilla smell ...

A Buddha half-smile ever so gently starts making its way across the contours of my filled-out face (one would expect severe gauntness under these dreadful circumstances, would you not?). I think of the arms of my supernaturally accommodating husband. I think of how excited I am around his usual home-time; how my body craves his hello hugs and kisses. How I follow him like a puppy to his room so that I might, maybe, be given another scrap from his table of love. I think of his arms around me at night in bed and the sense of safety. How I seek every excuse to go back for more. Eating together. Watching TV together. Shopping together. Talking together. Arguing together. Phoning him for the littlest reason and hearing his reassuring voice. "*Ek kom vannaand vroeg huistoe. Miskien kan ons saam iets doen*?" (I am coming home early tonight. Maybe we can do something together?) My eyes drink from the cup of his face – insatiable.

His old mother. The privilege of sharing her days. A light scratching at my door.
"*Margot, my handsak is weer weg*." (Margot, my handbag has gone missing again.) Tears rimming her eyes.
"*Moenie bekommer nie, Moedertjie. Kom ons dink saam. Waar het die handsakvoete hierdie keer heen geloop? Kan Ma aan moontlikhede dink? Hierdie voete! Hulle gee ons voorwaar 'n harde tyd, nê?*" (No worries, Little Mother. Let us think together. Where did the handbag's feet take it to this time? Can you think of possibilities? These feet. They do give us such a hard time, don't they?)
A small smile starts to replace the anguish of the not-remembering. Her desolate little figure, holding her head, saying over and over and over:
"*Ek kan nie onthou nie. Ek kan nie onthou nie*." (I can't remember, I can't remember.)
What a profound privilege to take her hand and together walk the path of seeking keys, money, handbags, credit cards, lost memories. Giving her emaciated body a hold and a hug and saying:
"*Dis OK, Ouma. Dis OK Moedertjie*. *Ons almal se koppe los ons soms. Saam sal ons ... kry*" (It's OK, Grandmother. It's OK, Little Mother. All of us have our heads leave us sometimes. Together we shall find ...)

The profound privilege of hearing her tell her stories and our re-building of our relationship of mother-daughter. Her constant reassurance that she is my mother now; that I am *not* motherless in this world. What a privilege. What an astoundingly wonderful privileging from a world where memories have become like white doves that softly come and go at will.

My children. The knowing that my Bianca is one short car journey away from me. The knowing that I can share a meal with her at will. I can go shopping with her again. I can meet her friends. I can go to a rugby match with

her or watch the game on TV with her – my rugby-insane daughter! I can hear her laugh. I can soothe her tired bones after a day of work. I can buy little nothings to leave on her bed when she comes to visit. She so loves her mummy's little presents. Her beautiful face lighting up like the sun at the joy of the receiving. Putting off going to bed, building the excitement of finding out what the 'bed-prezzie' is this time. Feeling welcomed and loved and special. My Bianca. Finding a single one of her hairs here and there and everywhere once she has left to inhabit her own grown-up life again. Holding the hair to my face and loving her from afar.

From afar ... Should a boy be so far from his mother's arms? A continent away? A time zone away? Sporadic phone calls are the only contact. What to talk about? No shared life to prompt topics of conversation. We regurgitate the same questions and the same answers. Every time I think of him renewed pain pierces my heart - like an assegai seared in a bed of hot coals. The missing eats at my heart like a parasite, or rips at my flesh daily like a monstrous serpent: hissing and spitting and taunting. This hasn't changed. Being here or being there or being in-between hasn't changed this ... the missing, the longing and the agony of the hole in my heart. Phone calls reiterate the love and care, but do not diminish the missing. Phone calls bring the pain of the not-there/not-here into stark relief every time; they compound the fact that I cannot touch him, hold him, share his day, grow the relationship with Rosanna, play with his dogs - Ellie and Igor- listen to the fears, sadnesses, agonies, joys, hopes that inhabit his life. The landscapes of our telephone calls are populated with a tangible distance.

I have his photo as a screensaver on both my mobile phone and my computer. I often wonder whether I cosset some masochistic streak. How different life would be if we could revert to the shared days of before. Always talking. Always solving together the problems of life and the world. Becoming passionately involved in the philosophical arguments that we splash into with wild abandonment. Each holds a position for the sake of staying connected. Endless emails, endless texts reassuring a son of his mother's love and missing. This has not changed. The airplane trip has done nothing to obliterate this reality. I miss my son. I love my son. He is not here ... either. It is as if he lives on Mars - a time zone or ten away from me.

On the first available Friday morning after my arrival my godchild and her new baby son arrive to say hello. My child. She has always *really* been my child. Since the day of her birth. Incubated in a different body, but *my* child. I *feel* my heart exploding with love and joy as she drives through the security gate. I can hardly breathe with excitement. My child. My child of my heart. And our new baby. The tentative start to a re-establishing of our relationship. Stories start, bursting into bloom. They are spontaneously interrupted by another telling. No narrative completed! Too much to say and too little time. Stories old and stories new, entangled, all impatiently seeking their birthing into our telling. Both of us not knowing quite how to navigate our new-found going on together. We hang the paintings she has done especially for me. The art from her heart. It has been so *many* years of separation. Reconnecting and revelling in the reconnections. My child and her children. Another indelible reason for traversing the great unknown. My eyes do not leave her face, my hands do not leave her baby. She has to rush back. She needs to pick up the others from school. She drives off, but leaves me with an infusion of happiness. With the soft cotton wool-like sense of "It's going to be OK."

Ten weeks of negotiating my new life pass. I navigate a certain rhythm to my days. Some are better, some are worse. A phone call. The ship has docked. Can the delivery company deliver my possessions the next day? Boxes upon boxes remain chaotically stacked in the garage. Out of sight and out of mind. I need no remembering to put a ripple now into the seemingly calm pond of my new life. Yet, I want my books from the boxes. Thus far I have managed to plot a course across my days without my special security blanket, but I don't want to do that any longer. I pick a box at random and open it. I am flung across the floor with the velocity of a

bomb exploding. I slither down the wall and land in a foetus-shaped heap on the floor - sobs heaving from my soul. My tears make muddy puddles as they mix with the dirt and dust on the floor. I have been unexpectedly flooded with the memories of a life left behind. The smell emanating from the linen in the opened box keeps me on the floor, saturated in inexplicable agony that comes and goes in waves of ever-increasing force. Time passes. I find myself on my hands and knees, my head hanging, almost touching the floor. The tears begin to flow again, repuddling. Time passes. I don't know how much time, but it passes. I stagger to my feet, using the wall as support. The phone rings. It is my child. I ignore the call. The phone rings. It is Tielman. I answer the call. I sit back against the wall. I sob. He is so distraught.

"Praat met my! Wat gaan aan. Praat! Margot, wat gaan aan?" (Talk to me! What's happening. Talk! Margot, what's happened?)

I tell him about the smell and the flooding sensation. He understands. He had the same experience when he returned. He normalises and validates my distress. He allows me my sadness at things passed. We talk. In the talking I tentatively start the unpacking. I hear the busyness on his side of the phone, but he takes care of me. It will be OK ... The in-between will become the un-between ... eventually. The World will become Home ... eventually. Disattachment will be learnt ... eventually.

A myriad of things happen between arriving in South Africa and leaving for the United States of America. Big things, small things, things noteworthy, things not. Life is lived day by day. Sometimes progress is made on my dissertation and sometimes it is not. The pulse of life continues at its own pace; it does not tolerate any interference from anyone, least of all me. Eventually dates and an itinerary for our visit to the USA is captured on paper and the tickets bought. The going suddenly becomes real. Whereas before it was a story in my mouth and in my head for so long, it is now moving from the plans to the purpose. The time leading up to the ride to O R Tambo Airport is like some amorphous being that I cannot really grab a hold of. When I imagine I have it in its entirety, it bubbles out somewhere else. Yet, one memory about this time of abstract surrealism stands out.

I have to go back into the garage and dig in my boxes from 'home' to find my winter clothes for my USA trip. One word describes my walk to the garage: P.E.T.R.I.F.I.E.D. Will the same pain that I experienced when I opened the boxes initially escape again from these self-same boxes? Can I face it? Will I be able to deal with it? I have a strong suspicion that if I react much more than "Oh, here is what I am looking for," I might upset Tielman beyond his capacity to endure. After all, he had interrupted some very important business he was dealing with before our leaving to come and help me take the boxes down.

Reflection: *A part of my unmentioned story about leaving England – migration - is about how the company where I had stored our extra furniture and belongings after Tielman had returned to South Africa, had 'misplaced' most of our things. The company had undergone so many changes of ownership during the period whilst our possessions were in storage with them, that no one could or would take responsibility for the loss. I was advised by a solicitor to absorb the loss, as civil proceedings would probably get me nowhere and cost plenty. Amongst the things that had inadvertently been packed at the time - in the madness of packing up a house and 'losing' a husband to circumstances outside of our control - was the diamond pendant my father had given my mother for their 25th wedding anniversary. She wore that diamond until the day she was taken into frail care. When Tielman had initially come back to South Africa some of the boxes, which this company was instructed to ship to him, had arrived. Some did not. They form part of our 'lost in transit' belongings and lives. I had accepted that my mother's diamond and the watch my father had willed to Jacques had formed part of that lost consignment.*

I kept strong. I did not react to any smells or any finds in the boxes. I inadvertently opened a box that had initially been sent to Tielman – a 'wrong' box he had taken down from the pile. I just sighed, but nevertheless

started rooting around in the box. I began slowly at first and then faster, faster, faster. I recognised the contents. What if …? What if mummy's diamond is in here? What if …? I stop breathing. I pray. "Please, please, please, Universe, please? I deserve this. I couldn't even attend her funeral. I couldn't hold her to say good bye. I deserve this. PLEASE, Universe?" My hand touches the little red box. Relief, pain, sobs, anguish, heartbreak, grieving erupts from me like a demon being exorcised. I'm told that I cried and screamed like someone witnessing the most atrocious wrong. I don't remember that. I can vaguely remember running up and down the garden like a deranged person trying to find my soul, which had escaped from me when my hand touched the little red box. I can remember holding a tree as Tielman tied the pendant around my neck, just holding me and crying with me. He had also never had an opportunity to grieve for the woman who had given life to me.

Eventually the shuttle arrives. Paul puts all our cases into the boot. I question him about where he lives, where he is from, etc. He tells me he is hardly back from having lived in the UK for 10 years. We connect. We speak. I continue my research. A lot of my research seems to happen in taxis …

We disembark at J F Kennedy Airport in New York. My American adventure has started. We have three weeks of holidaying together before Tielman returns home and I go to Durham, New Hampshire, to study with my advisor, Professor Sheila McNamee. We gather our luggage; Tielman heads in search of a bagel and coffee stand and I head for a cell phone stall – communication remains paramount to me! We are accosted by a woman taxi driver (legal?) from Panama. She will take us to our hotel. It takes her a rather long time to find our hotel! Yet, my research is continuing: from a shuttle driver in South Africa to a taxi driver in New York!

As we are tourists we have to do the touristy things. We find the directions to Ellis Island. I have to know about migration to the USA. The irony amuses me: Tielman had to promise, hand on heart, that he will *not* do any work until he gets to his conference at the end of our holiday, but I am constantly inquiring; I find this inequity quite an acceptable *status quo*. We disembark from the ferry at Ellis Island.

I am *so* tired. I had watched Tielman sleep during our flight, but sleep had escaped me. My not-knowing swirled about the aircraft, tinged with the holes of fear of what it is that I have landed myself into once again. I am going to America for five months, once again removed from everyone I love. Even more time zones away. What is it about this connecting and pulling back like waves lapping at the beach? This stepping in and stepping out. My mother-in-law calls me a *rukkie-mens* (a little while person). A rhythm to my life. This is a new stepping in. Have I got the gall for it? Questions and uncertainties - unbearable in their intensity – are overarched by the knowing that if I did not do the coming to America, I would never finish my dissertation. How will I live with myself if I never finish my dissertation? The discourse of finishing my dissertation has been a living, pulsating heart in my life for the past twenty years. I have to do this. I will do this and I will be the strong African woman I claim to be in the doing of it.

We step off the ferry at Ellis Island. A certain numbness has taken hold of me as the tiredness and jetlag take its toll. I have a suspicion that it might also have something to do with not wanting to cope with anyone's pain right now. I have come to observe. I have not come to feel pain. My capacity to feel pain is overflowing. There is not one iota of space left in that jar. My feet hurt. My head hurts. We get a coffee. We go to the toilet. All is still bearable. But as we get to the top of the staircase to the first floor a monstrous fear besets me. A uniformed man is standing behind a podium at the top of the staircase. As he slams a gavel onto the podium he

shouts at us in a very loud, authoritative, officious voice. In a split second my thoughts multi-task and spiral out of control: "My passport. Where is my passport? In the hotel safe. Oh, God, what now? What's going to happen to me now? The Consulate. The UK Consulate. Forget South Africa. I need the UK Consulate." He must have noticed the abject fear and fright on my face. "Don't worry, ma'm" he consoles. "It's all part of making the Ellis Island experience authentic." With one gavel pounding he had ripped away my protective layer against the pain of others. The pain flooded in and still does. I move like a zombie through the exhibitions on the first floor. How will I make sense of what I am seeing and reading about migrations that took place many years ago, but yet still is so real for me? Words and pictures authenticate my experiences: fear, fright, expectation, disappointment, power, control and little me. A poster contains the words written by a Polish man: "I came here expecting streets of gold. Not only were they not gold, but I had to pave them." It is time to go. We need to get the ferry back. It is dark as we leave. I see the skyline of Manhattan from the ferry. I fall in love and I belong. The nagging feeling which tugged at my soul on the drive from the airport to the hotel has suddenly been named: love. total besotted in-loveness. How is this possible? How is it at all possible? How do I make sense of this sudden and complete belonging? How? How? How?

I breathe the air of New York City and I am rejuvenated. There is a connection with this city that goes beyond understanding. I manage to navigate my way around instinctively. I do not get lost as I soak up its vibrancy. I recall a former professor once saying to me: "Even the Big Apple will be too slow for you." I now wonder what he had known, way back then. I step off the ferry and my feet fit the streets. They retrace steps from before, my soul knows this. How can this be?

We eventually leave New York to drive to Durham to leave my multiple bags before we continue our holiday travels. A piece of me stays behind in New York City: a piece that connects with some other pieces already there which I don't understand. Just the knowing – the embodied knowing - and the belonging.

Eventually it is time to say goodbye and take our separate airplanes at Orlando Airport. Tielman returns to South Africa and I go to Durham. It is a good bye filled with the little nonsenses of saying good bye to the one you love and have been with for the past 30 years. Part excitement, part dread. I arrive in Durham. Mary Margaret fetches me from the bus shuttle to take me to The Pines, where I will be staying. It is a bit like coming home. Kate arrives a week later. She has come to spend a month and finish her dissertation. We will be leaving to go and live in the woods in a house-sit. I feel unsafe there. The house feels hostile and unwelcoming to me. I don't ask Kate whether she feels the same as I am a bit scared of her answer. I organise to go back to The Pines when she leaves. I cannot live in that house on my own. Kate and I negotiate our lives together, dancing the dance of settling in. I find it more difficult than she does. Her husband comes from Switzerland for a weekend to visit with her. Somehow something changes and the house is less inimical. Our time together is up. I go back to The Pines. I feel at home with Mary Margaret, Roger, the cats and the other guests. For the first time in a month I can breathe - a very, very long month - populated by witches, wizards, goblins, furies and fiends.

I adore being back at university. The young people are vibrant, helpful, kind. They give me a new sense of hope for the future of the world. I walk about the library in a daze, touching the books, standing, paging, closing my eyes, smiling, smelling, just drinking in the world of words. Magnificent. I sit in the Student Centre and watch and listen as the young people go about their business. I love the life that pulsates through the building. The campus is magnificent. A layer of snow on the ground; a stream cuts through the multitude of trees that populate the grounds. Little wooden bridges cross the stream at intervals. I get to know the terrain and

become more sure of my whereabouts. I hear "You're welcome" so often, and each time it brings a smile to my face.

I meet Helen - another mature student - at The Pines. Her husband lives and works in Portugal whilst she is studying in Durham. Sometimes our chats at the end of the day have a bit of a sleep-overy feel to them. She situates me and normalises what I feel and what I care about. She prompts me to go for walks and to appreciate the beauty of the surrounding countryside; and drags me to the library. A snow blizzard, apparently unprecedented, occurs during February. I go into the upstairs conservatory and soak up the elements. It soothes my questioning of self(?) and life.

During the Spring Break I meet Gita in New York City. I walk out of the Port Authority Bus Terminal onto 8th Avenue and I feel whisper-soft wings enfolding me whilst saying "Welcome back." I smile and spontaneously say right out loud: "You're welcome!!!" No one on the street even bats an eyelid at that! Gita and I go to Zabar's to buy food for our stay. We sit at the communal table in the café and eat, speaking to everyone and anyone. That is the flavour of the place. You share space, the table, seats, your food and yourself. This is New York City in all its vibey, multi-cultural splendour. My infatuation soars to toxic heights. We see shows. We sit for hours in the revolving restaurant staring at the city that never sleeps, chatting, quibbling, and loving our being together. We shop for clothes at 2 am in a store on Times Square. Glorious. Then the goodbye, but a promised visit to Tel Aviv during June makes it easier to leave each other. I get back to Durham. It feels as if I have been away for light years: I've returned completely rejuvenated and ready to roll with this thing of writing until Bianca arrives in April. Life is too good to behold. I am bursting at the seams and the writing spills forth from a fountain on the inside. A fountain infused by the life of New York City: throbbing with potential and expectancy.

My child is here. My Bianca has arrived to visit with me. I am immediately invited into her hurly burly world of perpetual motion. I look at my beautiful child and know that her visit is part of the healing that is transpiring. I am grateful to have been blessed by my precious children. I slide comfortably into the discourse of children as a blessing. I am proud to be their mother. Loving them from close by and from afar. I am happy with the relationships that we have maintained as a family even though we have spent great distances and times apart. Every day I draw from the solidity of these relationships. They are well-forged after years of working at the process: none of us wish to let go of our closeness as a family.

The end is nigh. I sit quietly and stare out of the window, aware that my time in Durham and the protection of being a cosseted student is fast approaching its conclusion. It's the end of another season in my life. I sit behind the same desk, the same computer, on the same chair that I have been sitting on for the past five months and I watch the same scene outside my window. I see the Oyster River gently, imperceptibly, making its way towards the sea. I have watched it freeze over and defrost as it adopts the rhythm of the abiding weather. It reminds me a little of writing this piece of work. At times I have gently flowed along with the current, writing at a temperate, yet even pace. At others I have found myself completely frozen over: unable to produce a word that makes any kind of sense. At these times I have lain on my bed for hours, staring at the ceiling whilst waiting for the inspiration to drop down onto me from above. And then the defrosting sets in: I jerkily restart the writing. Like the sirens of Greek mythology the writing has called out to me continuously in its inimitable sing-song way.

It has never left me be, but in its very distinctive voice has forever lured and, forever summoned me. These are the voices of stories to be told, of sense to be made.

I am thankful for the call of the writing. In the writing I have found healing. I left the UK feeling like an exploded light bulb - the fragmentation I had experienced was *so* acute. The writing has helped me re-story my being in the world. It has helped - slowly but surely - to put the fragments of the shattered light bulb back together again. I am grateful now that I could speak of the injustices perpetrated. I am grateful that the writing might bring healing to others in similar situations. I am grateful that I can now step away from a totalising world where the 'I' was dominating the 'We'. I am grateful that I can look back and see how I might have done things differently. The experience of being in such close proximity to the stories of others has added substance to my story as I re-situated it into a more relational context. In the process, I have taken a step away from the hurtful authority which the previous, thin story had held in my life. I am grateful, but the process was not easy. Never easy. Never, never easy …

I find myself disentangling from the meditative state I have fallen into whilst engaged in the final reading of the body of this dissertation. From far away I hear the cry of the vultures circling their carrion: big, ugly, black, stinky, mean scavengers; some circle above, some sitting patiently a few feet away from the soon-to-be-had meal. Some are more audacious. They start peck-pecking at the not-yet-dead body. I see their black eyes, filthy claws, powerful beaks. I hear their squawking loud and clear, screeching out my final reflection on this piece of work: "And where is this person who advocates impermanence, non-self and interbeing in all of this? Have I learnt anything at all? This is so all about me and my being *in* and *of* the world ... self, self, self." Ah, but I hold no ultimate truth. I am allowed both/and ...

Life comes **The only outcomes:**
Life goes **Some we lose** **The ones we choose …**
Life ebbs **Some we win** **C'est la vie.**
Life flows
(Pretoria, 21 June 2011)

s

LIST OF SOURCES CONSULTED

Ayvazian, K & Tatum, S 1996. The talking oppression blues: Including the experience of power/powerlessness in the teaching of "cultural sensitivity", in M McGoldrick (ed.). *Re-visioning family therapy. Race, culture and gender in clinical practice*. New York, NY: Guilford.

Ali, S 2011. 'Go west young man': The culture of migration among Muslims in Hyderabad, India, in R Cohen & G Jónsson, (eds.). *Migration and Culture*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing. pp 477-500.

Allen, R K & Barber, K M 1992. Ethical and epistemological tensions in applying a postmodern perspective to feminist research. *Psychology of Women Quarterly* 16:1-15.

American Psychiatric Association 2002. Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders. Text Revision (4th edition) s.l.: American Psychiatric Pub Inc.

Anderson, H D 1997. *Conversation, language, and possibilities. A postmodern approach to therapy*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

Anderson, H & Goolishian, K 1988. Human systems as linguistic systems: Evolving ideas about the implications for theory and practice. *Family Process* 27(4):371-393.

Anderson, N & Schlunke, K 2008. Cultural theory in everyday practice. South Melbourne: Oxford.

Andrews, M 2007. Exploring cross-cultural boundaries. D J Candinin, (ed.). *Handbook of narrative inquiry. Mapping a methodology*. Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage. 489-511.

Appignanesi, R & Garratt, C 2001. *Introducing postmodernism*. New York: Totem Books.

Bakan, D 2010. Power, method, and ethics: A reflection on Bateson's view of moral and national character. R W Rieber, (ed.). *The individual, communication, and society. Essays in memory or Gregory Bateson*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 31-47.

Ball, L 2010. Profile of Mary Gergen, in A Rutherford (ed.). *Psychology's Feminist Voices Multimedia Internet Archive.* Available: http://www.feministvoices.com/laura.ball /. [2012, February 26].

Ballard, K 1996a. Paradigm lost and regained, in L Heshusius, & K Ballard, (eds.). *From positivism to interpretivism and beyond: Tales of transformation in education and social research. (The mind-body connection).* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Ballard, K 1996b. Finding the ghost in the machine and giving it back its body, in L Heshusius, & K Ballard, (eds.). *From positivism to interpretivism and beyond: Tales of transformation in education and social research. (The mind-body connection).* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Bateson, M C 2010. Language, languages, and song: The experience of systems (1968), in R W Rieber, (ed.). *The individual, communication, and society. Essays in memory or Gregory Bateson*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 129-146.

Behar, R 2006. *The vulnerable observer. Anthropology that breaks your heart*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Belsey, C 2002. *Post-Structuralism. A very short introduction*. Oxford: University Press.

Benson, M & O'Reilly, K 2011: Migration and the search for a better way of life: a critical exploration of lifestyle migration, in R Cohen, & G Jónsson, (eds.). *Migration and Culture*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing. 71-88.

Berger, P L & Luckmann, T 1966. *The social construction of reality. A treatise in the sociology of knowledge*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Bhasin, K 1993. *What is patriarchy?* New Delhi: Raj.
Bird, A 2011. *Thomas Kuhn* [online]. Winter 2011. The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy. Available: http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2011/entries/thomas-kuhn/. [2012, February 24].
Bookrags, 2012. *Giambattista Vico*. [online]. Available : http://www.bookrags.com/biography/giambattista-vico/. [2012, February 24].
Brettel, C B 2008. Theorizing migration in anthropology. The social construction of networks, identities, communities, and global spaces, in C B Brettel, & J F Hollifield, (eds.). *Migration theory. Talking across disciplines* (2nd edition). New York, NY: Routledge 113-160.
Brink, A M 1996. The interaction between the psychological well-being of nurses and the organisational climate in which they work. Unpublished master's dissertation. Pretoria: University of Pretoria.
Brink, A M 2003. Reflections on pastoral conversations with a missing child's mother. Unpublished master's dissertation. Pretoria: Unisa.
Bruner, J 1991. The narrative construction of reality. *Critical Inquiry* 18(1):1-21.
Bruner, J 2009. The narrative construction of self, in K J Gergen, S M Schrader, & M Gergen, (eds.). *Constructing worlds together. Interpersonal communication as relational process*. Boston, MA: Pearson. 54-57.
Brunner, E M 1986. Ethnography as narrative, in V Turner, & E M Brunner, (eds.). *The anthropology of Experience*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
Bűrgelt, P T, Morgan, M & Pernice, R 2011. The migration process through the eyes of migrants, in R Cohen, & G Jónsson, (eds.). *Migration and Culture*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing. 707-730.
Burr, V 1995. *An introduction to social construction*. London: Routledge.
Burr, V 2008. *Social Constructionism*, (2nd edition). London: Routledge.
Butler, C 2002. *Postmodernism. A very short introduction*. Oxford: University Press.
Butler, J 1995. Contingent Foundations, in S Benhabib, Butler, D Cornell, & N Fraser (eds.). *Feminist Contentions*. *A philosophical exchange*. London: Routledge.35-57.
Cain, M 1993. Foucault, feminism and feeling: what Foucault can and cannot contribute to feminist epistemology, in C Ramazanogly (ed.). *Up against Foucault. Explorations of some tensions between Foucault and Feminism*. 73-96. London & New York, NY: Routledge.
Campbell, J (ed.). 1971. The portable Jung. New York, NY: Penguin.
Camus, A 1991. *The myth of Sisyphus: And other essays*. New York, NY: Vintage Books. 1-124.
Castells, M 2000. *The power of identity*. Oxford: Blackwell.
Chang, W 2008. *Autoethnography as method*. Walnut Creek, CA.: Left Coast Press.
Chase, S E 2005. Narrative Inquiry: Multiple lenses, approaches, voices in K Denzin, & Y Lincoln, (eds.). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. 651-680.
Christians, C G 2003. Ethics and politics in social research , in K Denzin, & Y Lincoln, (eds.). *The landscape of qualitative research (2nd* edition*).* Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage. 208-244.
Chui, C-Y & Hong, Y-Y 2006. *Social psychology of culture*. New York, NY: Psychology Press.
Chvasta, M 2001. *The mediated life: And I loved her*. Available: www.cas.usf.edu/-mchvasta/themediatedlife.html. [2012, March 08].
Clark, M E 2004. Rhetoric, patriarchy & war: Explaining the dangers of 'leadership' in mass culture. *Women and Language*, 27(1):39-46.
Clandinin, D J & Huber, J 2010. Narrative inquiry, in B McGraw, E Baker, & P Peterson, (eds.). *International encyclopedia of education* (3rd edition). New York, NY: Elsevier. 436-441.
Cochrane, J R De Gruchy, & Petersen, R 1991. *In word and deed: Towards a practical theology for social transformation*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications.
Coffey, A & Atkinson, P 1996. *Making sense of qualitative data*. Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage.
Cohen, M 2010. *Changing cultural landscapes. How are people and their communities affected by migration and*

settlement? St. Catherine's, ON: Crabtree.
Cohen, R & Jónsson, G (eds.). 2011. *Migration and Culture*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing.
Collins, J & Mayblin, B 1996. *Introducing Derrida*. New York, NY: Totem Books.
Connelly, F M, & Clandinin, D J 1990. Stories of experience and narrative inquiry. *Educational Researcher, 19* (5), 2-14.
Conquergood, D 1991. Rethinking ethnography: Towards a critical cultural politics. *Communication monographs*, 58, June 1991, 179-194.
Conquergood, D 2002. Performance studies: Interventions and radical research. *Drama Review*, 46(2), 145-146.
Crotty, M 2010. *The foundations of social research. Meaning and perspective in the research process.* London: Sage.
Daly, M 1979. *Gyn/Ecology. The metaethics of radical feminism*. London: Women's Press.
Davies, B 1991. The concept of agency: A feminist poststructuralist analysis. *Postmodern Critical Theorising* 30:42-53.
Davies, B & Harre, R 1991. Positioning: The discursive production of selves. *Journal of the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 20(1):43-63.
De Beauvoir, S 1988 (1949). *The second sex*. London: Pan Books.
Denzin, K & Lincoln, Y 2003. *The landscape of qualitative research (2nd* edition*).* Thousand Oaks: Sage.
Derrida, J 1981. *Positions*. (Trans. Alan Bass.) Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
Derrida, J 1986. *Glas*. (Trans. Leavy, J P & Rand, R.) Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.
Doan, R E 1997. Narrative therapy, postmodernism, social Constructionism and constructivism: Discussion and distinctions. *Transactional Analysis Journal* 27(2):128-133.
Dockery, D S 1995. (ed.). *The challenge of postmodernism: An evangelical engagement*. Wheaton, ILl: Victor Books/SP Publications.
Dudley-Marling, C 1996. On becoming, in L Heshusius, & K Ballard, (eds.). *From positivism to interpretivism and beyond: Tales of transformation in education and social research. (The mind-body connection).* New York NY: Teachers College Press.
Eagleton, M 2011. Who's Who and Where's Where: Constructing Feminist Literary Studies. *Feminist Review: Issue 53*, The Feminist Review Collective (eds.). e-library: Taylor & Francis.
Easthope, H 2011. Fixed identities in a mobile world? The relationship between mobility, place and identity in R Cohen, & G Jónsson, (eds.). *Migration and Culture*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing. 61-70.
Eisesland, N L 1994. *The disabled God. Toward a liberatory theology of disability*. Nashville, TE: Abingdon Press.
Elliot, H 1997. En-gendering distinctions: Postmodernism, feminism, and narrative therapy. *Gecko* 1:52-71.
Ellis, C 2004. *The ethnographic I*. Walnut Creek, Calif: AltaMira.
Embree, L (ed.). 2011 *Alfred Schutz. Collected Papers V. Studies in social theory*. Phaenomenologica. Dordrecht: Springer.
Epstein, E K 1995. The narrative turn: Postmodern theory and systemic therapy. *Gestalt Theory*, 17(3):171-183.
Epston, D 1993. Internalised other questioning with couples: The New Zealand version, in S Gilligan, & R Price, (eds.). *Therapeutic conversations*, 183-189. New York, NY: Norton.
Epston, D 1998. *Catching up with David Epston: A collection of narrative practice-based papers published between 1991 & 1996*. Adelaide: Dulwich Centre Publications.
Epston, D & White, M 1994. Temper tantrum parties: Saving face, losing face, or going off your face, in *Experience, contradiction, narrative & imagination: Selected papers of David Epston and Michael White 1989-1991*, 37-74. Adelaide: Dulwich Centre Publications.
Epston, D, White, M & Murray, K 1999. A proposal for re-authoring therapy: Rose's revisioning of her life and a commentary, in S McNamee, & K J Gergen, (eds.). *Therapy as social construction*. London: Sage.
Erickson, M H (1965/1980). The use of symptoms as an integral part of hypnotherapy in E L Rossi, (ed.). *The collected papers of Milton H. Erickson on hypnosis. IV. Innovative hypnotherapy*. New York, NY: Irvington. 212-223.
Faist, T 1997. The Crucial Meso-Level, in *International Migration, Immobility and Development: Multidisciplinary*

Perspectives. T Hammer, G Brochmann, K Tamas, & T Faist, (eds.). Oxford: Berg Publishers. 187-217.
Fine, M Weis, L Weseen, S & Wong, L 2003. For Whom? Qualitative research, representations, and social responsibilities, in K Denzin, & Y Lincoln, (eds.). *The landscape of qualitative research (2nd* edition*)* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. 167-207.
Fish, V 1993. Poststructuralism in family therapy: Interrogating the narrative/conversational mode. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy,* 19(3):221-232.
Fontana, A & Frey, J H 2005. The interview. From neutral stance to political involvement, in N Denzin, & Y Lincoln, (eds.).*The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd edition), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. 695-727.
Forster, M R 1998. *Guide to Thomas Kuhn's The structure of scientific revolutions* [online]. Available: philosophy.wisc.edu/forster/220/**kuhn**.htm. [2012 February 24].
Foucault, M 1967. *Madness and civilisation: A history of insanity in the age of reason*. London: Tavistock.
Foucault, M 1970. *The order of things: An archaeology of the human sciences*. London: Tavistock.
Foucault, M 1972. *The archaeology of knowledge*. London: Tavistock.
Foucault, M 1973. *The birth of the clinic: An archaeology of medical perception*. London: Tavistock.
Foucault, M 1977a. *Discipline and Punish: The birth of the prison*. London: Allen Lane.
Foucault, M 1977b. The political function of the intellectual. *Radical Philosophy.* 17:12-14.
Foucault, M 1979. *The history of sexuality, Volume One: An introduction*. London: Allen Lane.
Foucault. M 1980. *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings 1972-1977*. C Gordon, (ed.). New York, NY: Pantheon Books.
Foucault, M 1986. *The use of pleasure: The history of sexuality Volume Two*. London: Viking.
Foucault, M 1988. *The care of self: The history of sexuality Volume Three*. London: Penguin.
Foucault, M 2003. Power and Confession 2003, in K J Gergen, & M Gergen, (eds.). *Social Construction. A reader*. London: Sage. 47-49.
Freedman, J & Combs, G 1996a. *Narrative therapy: The social construction of preferred realities*. New York, NY: Norton.
Freedman, J & Combs, G 1996b. Gender stories. *Journal of Systemic Therapies* 15(1):35-44.
Freeman, J, Epston, D & Lobovits D 1997. *Playful approaches to serious problems. Narrative therapy with children and their families*. New York, NY: Norton.
Friedman, S 2001 (ed.). *The new language of change. Constructive collaboration in psychotherapy*. New York, NY: Guilford.
Friere, P 1978. Pedagogy of the Oppressed. Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books.
Fruggeri, L 1999. Therapeutic process as the social construction of change, in S McNamee, & K J Gergen, (eds.). *Therapy as social construction*. London: Sage.
Gadamer, H-G 1983. Reasons in the age of science. (Trans. Lawrence, F G.) in T McCarthy, (ed.). *Studies in contemporary German thought*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
Gadamer, H-G Weinsheimer, J & Marshall D G 2004. *Truth and Method*. London: Continuum.
Gallagher, D J 1996. A long road ahead: Contemplating the future from the perspective of a young interpretist, in L Heshusius, & K Ballard, (eds.). *From positivism to interpretivism and beyond: Tales of transformation in education and social research. (The mind-body connection).* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
Geertz, C 1873. *The Interpretation of cultures.* New York, NY: Basic Books.
Gergen, K J 1971. *The concept of self*. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.
Gergen, K J 1985. The social constructionist movement in modern psychology. *American Psychologist* 40(3):266-275.
Gergen. K J 1991. *The saturated self. Dilemmas of identity in contemporary life*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
Gergen, K J 1994. *Realities and relationships. Soundings in Social Construction*. Massachusetts, MA: Harvard University Press.

Gergen, K J 2001. A civil world beyond individual and community, *Civil Society between Liberalism and Communitarianism* (preliminary draft), Vienna, November 2001, s.l.
Gergen, K J 2004. *An invitation to Social Construction*. London: Sage.
Gergen, K J 2009a. *Relational being. Beyond self and community*. Oxford: University Press
Gergen, K J 2009b. *An invitation to Social Construction (2nd* edition*)*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
Gergen, K J n.d. *Relational theory and the discourses of power*. Available: http://www.swarthmore.edu/Documents/faculty/gergen/relational_theory.pdf.[2012, March 01].
Gergen, K H s.a. *When relationships generate realities: Therapeutic communication reconsidered* (unpublished manuscript). Available: http://www.swarthmore.edu/Documents/faculty/gergen/When_Relationships_Generate_Realities.pdf. [2012 March 01].
Gergen, K J s.a. *Writing as relationship*. Available: http://www.swarthmore.edu/Documents/faculty/gergen/Writing_as_Relationship.pdf. [2012, March 01].
Gergen, K J & Gergen, M 2003. Qualitative Inquiry. Tensions and Transformations, in K Denzin, & Y Lincoln, (eds.). *The landscape of qualitative research (2nd* edition*),* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. 575-610.
Gergen, K J & Gergen, M 2004. *Social Construction. Entering the dialogue*. Chagrin Falls, OH: Taos Institute Publications,.
Gergen, K J, McNamee, S & Barrett, F 2001. Toward a vocabulary of transformative dialogue (draft). *International Journal of Public Administration*, 2001, 24, 697-707. Available: http://www.swarthmore.edu/Documents/faculty/gergen/Toward_A_Vocabulary_of_Transformative_Dialogue.pdf. [2012 March 01].
Gergen, K J & Hosking, D M 2006. If you met Social Constructionism along the way. *Horizons in Buddhist psychology. Practice, Research and Theory*. Chagrin Falls, OH: Taos Institute Publications. 299-314.
Gerharz, E 2011. When migrants travel back home: Changing identities in Northern Sri Lanka after the ceasefire of 2002, in R Cohen, & G Jónsson, (eds.). *Migration and Culture*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing. 583-601.
Giddens, A 1991. *Modernity of self-identity: Self and society in the late modern age*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.
Gonzalez, N 1992. *Dollar, Dove and Eagle. One hundred years of Palestinian migration in Honduras*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
Grayling, A C 1988. *Wittgenstein.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Greenwood, J 1994. Action research and action researchers: some introductory considerations. *Contemporary Nurse* 3 (2) 84-92.
Grenz, S J 1996. *A primer on postmodernism*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B Erdman.
Griffin, S 1978. *Woman and nature: The roaring inside her.* New York, NY: Harper & Row.
Gutting, G 2005. *Foucault. A very short introduction*. London: Oxford.
Hames-García, M 2011. *Identity complex. Making the case for multiplicity*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
Hanisch, C 1969. *The personal is the political.* Available: http://www.carolhanisch.org/CHwritings/PersonalisPol.pdf. [2012 March 02].
Harré, R & Van Langenhove, L 1999. Introducing positioning theory, in R Harré, & L Van Langenhove, (eds.). *Positioning Theory. Moral Contexts of Intentional action* Oxford: Blackwell. 14-31.
Harrison, B W 1990. *Making the connections: Essays in feminist social ethics*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.
Hawkseworth, M 2006. *Feminist inquiry. From political conviction to methodological innovation*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
Heath, J & Groves, J 2005. *Introducing Wittgenstein.* Thriplow: Icon Books.

Heidegger, M 1962. *Being and Time*, (trans. J Macguire and E Robinson) London: SCM Press.); (re-translated by Joan Stambaugh) Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1996.
Heshusius, L & Ballard, K 1996a. *From positivism to interpretivism and beyond: Tales of transformation in education and social research. (The mind-body connection).* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
Heshusius, L & Ballard, K 1996b. How do we count the ways we know? Some background to the project, in L Heshusius, & K Ballard, (eds.). *From positivism to interpretivism and beyond: Tales of transformation in education and social research. (The mind-body connection).* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
Heshusius, L & Ballard, K 1996c. Afterthoughts, in L Heshusius, & K Ballard, (eds.). *From positivism to interpretivism and beyond: Tales of transformation in education and social research. (The mind-body connection).* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
Hill, S 1992. The Question of identity, in S Hall, D Held, & T McGrew, (eds.). *Modernity and its future*. Cambridge: Open University Press. 273-316.
Hirschkop, K & Shepherd, D (eds.). 2001. *Bahktin and Cultural theory*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
Hoffman, L 1993. A reflexive stance for family therapy, in McNamee, & K J Gergen, (eds.). *Therapy as social construction*. London: Sage.
Holman Jones, S H 2005. Autoethnography. Making the personal the political, in K Denzin, & Y Lincoln, (eds.). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. 763-791.
Holquist, M 2002. Dialogism. *Bahktin and his world* (2nd edition). London: Routledge.
hooks, b 2000. *Feminism is for everybody. Passionate politics*. London: Pluto Press.
Hosking, D M 2011. *Relational Constructionism*. Notes provided during a workshop on Relational Construction, April 2011, in Utrecht, Netherlands.
Howard, G S 1991. Culture tales. A narrative approach to thinking, cross-cultural psychology and psychotherapy. *American Psychologist* 46(3):187-197.
Husserl, E 1931. *Cartesian Meditations*. (trans. D. Cairns). Dortrecht: Kluwer.
Iversen, R R, Gergen, K J & Fairbanks, R P 2005. Assessment and social construction: Conflict or co-creation. *British Journal of Social work*, 35:1-20.
Janesick, V J 1994. The dance of qualitative research design: Metaphor, methodolatry and meaning, in N K Denzin, & Y S Lincoln, *Handbook of qualitative research*. London: Sage Publications. 209-219.
Jenks, C 1993. *Culture*. London: Routledge. [Online]. Available: www.nous.org.uk/jenks.html. [2012 January 11].
Johnson, C 1999. *Derrida*. New York, NY: Routledge.
Jones, A 1990. Am "I" in the text? The positioned/partial subject and writing in the feminist classroom. *National Women's Studies Association Conference*. Ohio.
Keane, M H 1998. Feminist and womanist theology, in S S Maimela, & A König, (eds.). *Initiation into theology: The rich variety of theology and hermeneutics*, Pretoria: Van Schaik. 121-135.
Keilley, M K & Piercy, F P 1999. The 'consulting-your-consultants interview': a final narrative conversation with graduating family therapy Masters' students. *Journal of Marital Family Therapy*, October, 25(4):461-468.
Kendall, G & Wickham, G 2001. *Understanding Culture. Cultural studies, order, ordering*. London: Sage.
Kilian, J 1985. *Form and FORMAT in theological texts. A guide for the use of the Harvard Reference System*. Pretoria: Unisa.
Kojève, A 1969. *Introduction to the reading of Hegel.* Lectures on the phenomenology of spirit, assembled by R Queneau. Edited by Allna Bloom. Translated from the French by James H. Nichols, Jr. Ithaca, NY: Cornell Press.
Koser, Khalid, 2007. *International migration. A very short introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Kotzé, D 2002. Doing participatory ethics, in D Kotzé, J Myburg, J Roux, & Associates. *Ethical ways of being*. Pretoria: Ethics Alive.
Kotzé, E & Kotzé D J 1997. Social construction as postmodern discourse: An epistemology for conversational therapeutic practice. *Acta Theologica* 17(1):27-50.

Kozalin, A (ed.). 1986. *Lev Vygotsky. Thought and language* (Revised edition). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
Krause, I-B 1998. *Therapy across culture*. London: Sage.
Kreb, N B 1999. *Edgewalkers: Defusing cultural boundaries on the new global front*. Far Hills, NJ: New Horizon.
Kristof, N D & WuDunn, S 2009. *Half the sky. Turning oppression into opportunity for women worldwide*. New York, NY: Vintage Books.
Lahiri, J 2004. *The Namesake*. New York, NY: Mariner Books.
Laing, R D 1991. *The divided self.* New York, NY: Penguin Psychology.
Langellier, K M 1999. Personal narrative, performance, and performativity: Two or three things I know for sure. *Text and Performance Quarterly*, 19, 125-144.
Lannamann, J W 1999. On being relational in an accountable way: The questions of agency and power in S McNamee, & K J Gergen, (eds.). *Relational responsibility*. London: Sage.
Larner, G 1994. Para-modern family therapy: Deconstructing postmodernism. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy* 15(1):11-16.
Lather, P 1991. *Getting smart. Feminist research and pedagogy with/in the postmodern.* New York, NY: Routledge.
Lawler, V 1995. *I was dreaming to come to America. Memories from the Ellis Island Oral History Project*. New York, NY: Puffin Books.
Lechner, F J & Boli, J 2005. *World culture. Origins and Consequences*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
Lessing, J 1995. *From the Ganges to the Hudson: Indian immigrants in New York City*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
Levitt, P 2001. *The transnational Villagers*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
Lock, A & Strong, T 2010. *Social Constructionism. Sources and stirrings in theory and practice.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
Lorde, A 1995. The transformation of silence into language and action, in S Ruth *Issues in feminism. An introduction to women's studies*. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing. 151-153.
Lucy, N 2004. *A Derrida Dictionary*. Oxford: Blackwell.
Malmberg, G 1997. Time and space in international migration, in T Hammer, G Brochmann, K Tamas, & T Faist, (eds.). *International migration, mobility and development multidisciplinary perspectives*. Oxford: Berg Publishers. 21-48.
Markam, A N (2005). The methods, politics, and ethics of representation in online ethnography, in K Denzin, & Y Lincoln, (eds.). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. 793-820.
Maynes, M J, Pierce, J L & Laslett, B 2008. *Telling stories. The use of personal narratives in the social Sciences and history*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
McGill, D 1992. The cultural story in multicultural family therapy. *Families in Society*, 73(6):339-349.
McLean, C Carey, M & White, C 1995 (eds.). *Men's ways of being. New directions in therapy and psychology*. Colorado, CO: Westview.
McNamee, S 1996. *The relational construction of meaning. Out of the head and into the discourse* (draft), in Talon de Aquiles, 1996 and Dialogog Refleksion, 1996. Available: http://pubpages.unh.edu/~smcnamee/dialogue_and_transformation/Relational_Construction_of_meaning.pdf. [2011, April 11] 1-7.
McNamee, S & Gergen, K J (eds.). 1992. *Therapy as social construction*. London: Sage.
McNamee, S & Gergen, K J (1999). *Relational Responsibility*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
McNamee, S 2001. Reconstructing Therapy in a Postmodern World (draft): Relational Resources, in O Goncalves, & M Goncalves, (eds.). *Abordagens construcionistas a psicoterapia (Constructionists Approaches to Psychotherapy)*. Coimbra, Portugal: Quarteto. Available: http://pubpages.unh.edu/~smcnamee/therapeutic/Reconstructing_Therapy_in_a_Postmodern_World.pdf. [2011, April 11].

McNamee, S 2004a. Reflections on critical moments as transformations (draft), in Negotiation Journal 2004. Available: http://pubpages.unh.edu/~smcnamee/dialogue_and_transformation/Reflections_on_Critical_moments.pdf.[2011, April 11].

McNamee, S 2004b. Therapy as social construction. Back to Basics and Forward toward Challenging Issues (draft), in T Strong, and D Pare, (eds.). *Furthering Talk: Advances in the discursive therapies*. New York, NY: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Press. Available: http://pubpages.unh.edu/~smcnamee/therapeutic/Therapy_as_social_construction.pdf. [2011, April 11].

McNamee, S 2004c. Relational bridges between constructionism and constructivism (draft), in J D Raskin, & S K Bridges, (eds.). *Studies in Meaning 2: Bridging the personal and the social*. Available: http://psycnet.apa.org/psycinfo/2005-01590-000.[2011, April 11].

McNamee, S 2004d. Social construction as practical theory. Lessons for Practice and reflection in psychotherapy (draft), in D Pare, G Larner, (eds.). *Critical Knowledge and Practice in Psychotherapy*. New York, NY: Haworth Press. Available: http://pubpages.unh.edu/~smcnamee/therapeutic/Social_Construction_as_Practical_Theory.pdf. [2011, April 02].

McNamee, S 2007. *Transformative dialogue: Coordinating Conflicting Realities. The Lindberg Lecture 2008.* Durham, New Hampshire: University of New Hampshire. Available: www.unh.edu/liberal-arts/faculty/pdf/**Lindberg**Pub**2008**.pdf. [2012, March 01].

McNamee, S & Hosking, D M 2012. *Research and social change. A relational constructionist approach*. New York, NY: Routledge.

McNamee, S & Shotter, J s.a. Dialogue, creativity, and change (draft), in R Anderson, L Baxter, & Cissna, K (eds.). *Dialogic Approaches to Communication*. s.l.: Sage Publications. 1-25.

McNeil, M 1993. Dancing with Foucault. Feminism and power-knowledge, in C Ramazanogly, (ed.). *Up against Foucault. Explorations of some tensions between Foucault and Feminism*, 147-175. London & New York, NY: Routledge.

Mc Taggart, R 1997. (ed.). *Participatory action research. International contexts and consequences*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Melrose, M J 1996. Got a philosophical match? Does it matter? in O. Zuber-Skerrit (ed).*New directions in action research.* 49-65.

Meyerhoff, J & Visser, F 2010*. Bald Ambition: A critique on Ken Wilber's Theory of Everything*. Available: www.integralworld.com. [Accessed 21 April 2012.]

Murdoch, M 1998. *The heroine's journey workbook*. Boston, MA: Shambhala.

Muhr, A J 2002. *Auto ethnography online: Field notes to story*. Unpublished paper. University of South Florida.

Nance, K A 2006. Only connect? Empathy and extopy in teaching social justice literature, *Notes on Teaching English*, Vol 30 May 2006, 10-14.

Nhat Hanh, T 1987, *Being Peace*. Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press.

Nhat Hanh, T 1991. *Peace Is Every Step: The Path of Mindfulness in Everyday Life*. A Kotler, (ed.). New York, NY: Bantam.

Nhat Hanh*,* T 1995. *Living Buddha, Living Christ.* New York, NY: Riverhead Press.

Nhat Hahn, T 2001. *Anger. Wisdom for cooling the flames*. New York, NY: Riverhead Press.

Nhat Hahn, T 2006. *Understanding Our Mind: 50 Verses on Buddhist Psychology*. Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press.

Nicholas, D K & Wudunn, S 2009. *Half the sky. How to change the world*. London: Virago.

Oderth, R 2002. *An introduction to the study of human migration*. San Jose, CA: Writers Club Press.

Oleson, V L 2003. Feminism and qualitative research at and into the millennium, in N Denzin, & Y Lincoln (eds.). *The landscape of qualitative research (2nd* edition*).* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. 332-397.

Orwell, G 1950. *1984*. New York, NY: Signet Classic.
Pearce, W B 2007. *Making social worlds. A communication perspective*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
Peräkylä, A 2005. Analysing talk and text, in K Denzin, & Y Lincoln, (eds.).*The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. 869-886.
Plummer, K 1994. *Telling Sexual Stories: Power, Change and Social Worlds*. London: Routledge.
Poplin, M S 1996. Turning doubt into believing: Searching for pedagogy compatible with life, in L Heshusius & K Ballard (eds.). *From Positivism to Interpretivism and beyond: Tales of transformation in Educational research (The mind-body connection),* New York, NY: Teacher's College Press. 61-69.
Powell, J 1997. *Derrida for beginners*. New York, NY: Writers and Readers Publishing.
Powell, J 1998. *Postmodernism for beginners*. New York, NY: Writers and Readers publishing.
Pratt, M B 1995. *S/HE*. Ithaca, NY: Firebrand Books.
Rakow, L 1992. *Women making meaning. New feminist directions in communications.* New York, NY: Routledge.
Ravenstein, E G 1885. The laws of migration. *Journal of the Statistical Society of London*, 48(2) pp 167-235. Available: http://blog.lib.umn.edu/globerem/main/Ravenstein.pdf. [2012, March 27].
Reinhartz, S 1992. *Feminist methods in social research*. New York, NY: Oxford University.
Reissman, C K & Speedy, J 2007. Narrative inquiry into the psychotherapy professions: A critical review, in D J Clandinin, (ed.). *Handbook of narrative inquiry: Mapping a methodology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. 426-456.
Richardson, R L & Adams St Pierre, E 2005. Writing. A method of inquiry, in N Denzin & Y Lincoln, (eds.). *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. 951-978.
Richter, D J 2004. Ludwig Wittgenstein. *Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* [online], Available: http://www.iep.utm.edu/wittgens/. [2012, February 24].
Rieber, R W 2010. In search of the impertinent question: An overview of Bateson's Theory of Communication, in R W Rieber, (ed.). *The individual, communication, and society. Essays in memory or Gregory Bateson*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1-30.
Rosaldo, R 1993. *Culture & truth. The remaking of social analysis* (1993 edition). Boston, MA: Beacon.
Ruth, S 1995*. Issues in feminism. An introduction to women's studies*. Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing.
Sarup, M 1993. *An introductory guide to post-structuralism and postmodernism (*2nd edition*).* Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press.
Sayad, A 2004. *The suffering of the immigrant*. Cambridge: Polity.
Scheurich, J J & Bell McKenzie, K 2005. Foucault's methodologies. Archaeology and Genealogy, in N Denzin, & Y Lincoln, (eds.).*The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd edition), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. 841-868.
Schwandt, T A 2003. Three epistemological stances for qualitative inquiry. Interpretivism, hermeneutics, and social constructionism, in N Denzin, & Y Lincoln, (eds.). *The landscape of qualitative research* (2nd edition) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. 292-331.
Schram, T H 2006. *Conceptualizing and proposing qualitative research* (2nd edition). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson, Merrill Prentice Hall.
Shotter, J 1980. Action, joint action and intentionality, in M Brenner, (ed.). *The structure of Action.* 28-65. Oxford: Blackwell.
Shotter, J. (1981) Vico, moral worlds, accountability and personhood in P L F Heelas & A J Lock (eds.). *Indigenous Psychologies: The anthropology of the self.* London: Academic Press. 265-284.
Shotter, J 2003. The social construction of remembering and forgetting, in K J Gergen, & M Gergen, (eds.). *Social Construction. A reader.* London: Sage. 132-137.
Smart, B 1993. *Postmodernity*. London: Routledge.

Smith, J K 1996. My transition to interpretive inquiry, in L Heshusius, & K Ballard, (eds.). *From positivism to Interpretivism and beyond: Tales of transformation in education and social research. (The mind-body connection).* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Spradley, J P & McCurdy, D W 1972. *The cultural experience. Ethnography in complex society*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.

Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy. http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/.

Steier, F (ed.). 1991. *Research and reflexivity*. London: Sage.

Strathern, P 2000. *The essential Foucault*. London: Virgin Books.

Strathern, P 2003. *The essential Derrida*. London: Virgin Books.

Sturgeon, S 2002. Developing cultural awareness in human service professionals: A personal journey. *Social Work/Maatskaplike Werk,* 38(2):173-181.

Svašek, M 2011. Who cares? Families and feelings in movements, in R Cohen, & G Jónsson, (eds.). *Migration and Culture*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing. 89-106.

Swartz, L 1998. *Culture and mental health: a southern African view.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Tamasese, K & Waldegrave, C 1993. Cultural and gender accountability in the "Just Therapy" approach. *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy* 5(2):29-45.

Tamasese, K, Waldegrave, C, Tuhaka, F & Campbell, W 1998. Furthering conversation about partnerships of accountability: Talking about issues of leadership, ethics and care. *Dulwich Centre Journal*, 1998(4):51-62.

Taylor, S 2010. *Narratives of identity and place*. London: Routledge.

Thomas, L E 1997. Christinah Nku. A woman at the center of healing her nation, in M Townes, (ed.). *Embracing the spirit. Womanist perspectives on hope, salvation and transformation*. New York, NY: Orbis.

Thornham, S 2000. *Feminist theory and cultural studies. Stories of unsettled relations.* London: Arnold.

Trible, P 1984. *Texts of terror*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress.

Tsuda, T 2011. From ethnic affinity to alienation in the global ecumene: The encounter between the Japanese and Japanese-Brazilian return migrants, in R Cohen, & G Jónsson, (eds.). *Migration and Culture*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing. 295-333.

Vertovec, S 2011. Multiculturalism, culturalism and public incorporation, in R Cohen, & G Jónsson, (eds.). *Migration and Culture*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing. 351-371.

Vico, G 1744. *Sienza Nuova (New Science)*. (3rd edition). Trans. Marsh, D. 2000. Penguin Classics. London: Penguin.

Walker, R 2010. *Pushes and pulls. Why do people migrate?* St. Catherine's, ON: Crabtree.

Walters, M 2005. *Feminism. A short introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ward, G 2010. *Understand Postmodernism: Teach Yourself*. London: Hodder. [Online]. Available: Kindle e-book [2011, December 15].

Ward, G 1997. *Understand Postmodernism: Teach yourself*. London: McGraw-Hill. [Online]. Available: Kindle e-book [2011, December 15]

Ward, G 2011. *Discover Postmodernism: Flash*. London: Hodder.[Online]. Available: Kindle e-book [2011, December 15].

Watkins, S A, Rueda M & Rodriguez, M 1999. *Introducing feminism*. New York: Totem Books.

Webster, L & Mertova, P 2007. *Using narrative inquiry as a research method. An introduction to using critical event narrative analysis in research on learning and teaching*. London: Routledge.

Weedon, C 1987. *Feminist practice and poststructuralist theory*. Oxford: Basil Blackheath.

Welch, S D 1990. *A feminist ethic of risk*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress.

Welton, D 1999. The Essential Husserl: Basic Writings in Transcendental Phenomenology, in J Sallis, (ed.). *Studies in Continental Thought*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana Press.

White, M 1988/9. The externalising of the problem and the re-authoring of lives and relationships. *Dulwich Centre Newsletter*, Summer, 1988/9, 5-28.

White, M 1989. *Selected papers*. Adelaide: Dulwich Centre Publications.
White, M 1991. Deconstruction and Therapy. *Dulwich Centre Newsletter*, 3, 21-40.
White, M 1995. *Re-authoring lives: Interviews & essays*. Adelaide: Dulwich Centre Publications.
White, M 1997. *Narratives of therapists' lives*. Adelaide: Dulwich Centre Press.
White, M 2000. *Reflections on narrative practice: Essays and interviews*. Adelaide: Dulwich Centre Publications.
White, M 2007. *Maps of narrative practice*. New York, NY: Norton.
White, M & Epston, D 1990. *Narrative means to therapeutic ends*. New York, NY: Norton.
Wikipedia. 2012. *Alfred Schutz*. [Online]. Available: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alfred_Sch%C3%BCtz. [2012, February 24].
Wikipedia, 2012. *Edmund Husserl*. [Online]. Available: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edmund_Husserl.[2012, February 24].
Wikipedia, 2012. *Epistemology*. [Online]. Available: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Epistemology. [2012, February 26].
Wikipedia, 2012. *Giambattista Vico*. [Online]. Available: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giambattista Vico. [2012, February 24].
Wikipedia, 2012. *Ontology*. [online]. Available: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ontology. [2012, February 24].
Williams, J T & Shepard, E H 1996. *Pooh and the philosophers (The wisdom of Pooh)*. New York, NY: Dutton Books.
Wingard, B & Lester, J 2001. *Telling our stories in ways that make us stronger*. Adelaide: Dulwich Centre Publications.
Winter, R 1996. Some principles and procedures for the conduct of action research, in O. Zuber-Skerrit (ed.). *New directions in action research*. London Farmer Press. 13-27.
Wittgenstein, L 1953. *Philosophical Investigations*. Oxford: Blackwell.
Wittgenstein, L 1974. *Philosophical grammar* (ed. R. Rhees; trans. A. Kenny) Oxford: Blackwell.
Wood, R E 2012. *An Introduction to Thomas S. Kuhn's The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (originally published in 1962)*. [Online]. Available: www.camden.rutgers.edu/~wood/**kuhn**.htm. [2012, February 18].
World Health Organisation 2010. *International Classification of Disease (10th* edition*).* Herndon, VA: Stylus Publishing.
Zalewski, M 2000. *Feminism after postmodernism. Theorising through practice*. London: Routledge.

APPENDIX ONE

Covering e-mail to the Story guides

Dear

As you know, I am currently writing up my dissertation for my PhD, which focuses on migration. I am working under the supervision of Professor Sheila McNamee of the University of New Hampshire, USA.

I was wondering whether you would mind telling me about some of your experiences of having lived and/or worked in another country other than the country of your birth? If you have subsequently returned to your country of origin (birth), I would be privileged to hear about your experiences of having returned, too. If you have lived and/or worked in more than one country, other than your country of origin (birth), I would be so pleased to hear about those experiences, as well. Many people nowadays live in various countries during their lifetimes and also often seem to return to their countries of origin (birth) at different stages during their lives.

Please feel free to answer as many or as few of the guiding questions below as you feel comfortable with. Also, please remember that there is no wrong or right answer as I am only inquiring into your own, personal experience and opinions about migration.

I will return the chapter I am writing about 'Conversations' to you before the dissertation goes on its journey towards publication, so that you may have the opportunity to make sure that I have not quoted what you have said out of context and that I captured your meanings and intentions accurately.

I am hoping that the stories we tell during the course of this dissertation about our personal experiences of being migrants will inform the authorities dealing with such matters which will in turn inform their decision-making about future migratory issues.

Thank you very much for helping me in my quest of making the world a better place for everyone to live in. Please feel free to contact me on margot.brink1@gmail.com should you have any comments or questions.

NB: Please be so kind to forward these attached questions to anyone whom you think would be prepared to complete one or more or even all of the questions.

Kindest regards

margot brink
(phd student with TAOS Institute/Tilburg University)

APPENDIX TWO

The Story guide - Uncompleted

STORY GUIDE
Guiding Questions About Your Experience of Migration

PERSONAL INFORMATION		
Your Name:	**Date:**	**Would you like to use a pseudonym and what should your pseudonym be?**

Your Age:	**Your gender:**	**Where were you born?**

Which countries have you lived in since originally leaving your country of birth? How long did you live in each country?
MIGRATION **(***A migrant is seen as someone who stays outside of their usual country of residence for at least one year.***)**
How would you describe your overall experience of migration? Could you please tell me a story that would an illustration of your experience?
What <u>pulled</u> you towards migrating (made you consider migration as an option)?
What <u>pushed</u> you (eventually made you go) to migrate?
Why did you decide on the country you eventually migrated to? Was this country what you expected? How so?
What were your hopes and dreams and desires for your migratory experience? Do you think you contributed to the country you migrated to and is your contribution in line with your hopes and dreams and desires about migrating?
What was going on in your life when you left your country of origin? What were some of the things you preferred for your life and what were some of the things you would have preferred to *not* have been going on in your life before you left?
Would you go through the migratory process again? Why/why not? Who encouraged you to go?
What did you find difficult and/or easy about the process of migration? What would you do differently if you were to redo the process again?
What do you think the pros and cons of migration are in general? Would you encourage others to migrate?
What do you think the governments of your receiving country should/could do to make it easier for you to be there?

CULTURE **(***e.g., the ways that people, living in different part of the world, classify and represent their experiences.***)**
When you think about growing up, can you think of one specific cultural tradition (e.g., birthdays) passed on to you by your family? What was the cultural flavour of the house you grew up in? What are some of the earliest memories of these cultural influences you can recall? Can you remember any rituals, celebrations or traditions of your family? What cultural values did your family teach you? Can you tell a story that would represent an illustration of the cultural ethos of your family?
What cultural influences are still now important to you? How much of a factor in your life has your cultural background been?
Can you think of one specific cultural tradition or influence passed on to you by society in your country of origin?
How did you experience the new culture you moved into? Difficult? Easy? What made it so?
How much of the culture you moved into did you absorb, do you think? Are you OK with what you absorbed? What did you absorb that you would rather now discard? Would you prefer to move away from your adopted culture back to your culture of origin? Why/Why not? What do you still find strange about your new culture? Could you tell a story or tell about an incident that would describe how you interacted with the other culture you now found yourself immersed into?
What do you think the idea of culture includes? How would you describe it? If you had to write a definition about the concept of culture, what would that definition include?
Do you experience a sense of belonging/community in the country you migrated to? Does this community which you have now become part of include local people or did you gravitate more towards your 'own' people who live in your new country?
IDENTITY **(***e.g., how you would describe yourself.***)**
What in your adopted country shaped you the most in describing yourself as you would at the moment? Why do you think this shaped you in the way it has? What would you describe as the main things you learned about yourself whilst living in this culture different to your own?
What are some of the best memories about the culture you migrated to and do you hold some less preferable memories about this culture? Would you mind telling about a less preferable memory?
What did you accomplish in the country you moved to that you think you would not have accomplished in your country of origin?
Do you think there is something that you would like the Authorities (e.g., United Nations, International Office of Migration, Governments) world-wide to know that might help migrants all over the world?

When you left your country of origin, how would you have described yourself at that stage? How would one of the significant people in your life have described you at that time?
How would you describe yourself now that you have migrated? How would one of the significant persons in your life now describe you?
Would you like to change anything about those descriptions you mentioned above? Who/what contributed the most to the change in the way you described yourself before you migrated and to your description of yourself now?
Are there times when you would describe yourself differently to the way you described yourself above? When would those times be and what would contribute to the descriptions about yourself that would be relevant at that stage?
Do you think different descriptions of yourself are true for you about yourself at different times in your life/day and when different circumstances prevail?
How would you describe your personal identity or sense of self after your stay in your new country? Would this description be different to how you would have described yourself before you migrated?
... and finally ...
Did we leave anything out that you would still like to have discussed during this 'conversation'? Please tell any other stories which you think are important and representative of the process of migration between countries.
Can you think of any other questions which should have been included in this 'conversation'?

Thank you very much for taking so much time towards contributing to my understanding of your experience of migration and in contributing towards telling stories about your experience which stand against the mere statistical numbers which mostly represent our stories.

margot brink
margot.brink1@gmail.com

APPENDIX THREE

The Story guides – Completed

Margot
Danielle, Gabriella & Gita
Gabriella – Additional Version
Coenie
Alina
Heike
Kon
Stella
Penny
Phenyo
Jesse
Kate

STORY GUIDE
Guiding Questions About Your Experience of Migration

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Your Name:	**Date:**	**Would you like to use a pseudonym and what should your pseudonym be?**
Margot Brink	09-02-2012	No

Your Age:	**Your gender:**	**Where were you born?**
54	Female	Bedford, SA

Which countries have you lived in since originally leaving your country of birth? How long did you live in each country?

Taiwan, 3 months. England/Wales, 8 years

MIGRATION

(*A migrant is seen as someone who stays outside of their usual country of residence for at least one year.***)**

How would you describe your overall experience of migration? Could you please tell me a story that would be an illustration of your experience?

Shit. I know that this is a singular, individualistic statement as there must have been times that were good, but when I think about it now, my overriding sense is that it was crap. In Taiwan I was sick all the time as my tummy could not handle the food and landed up in hospital for intravenous feeding. I missed my kids dreadfully. My son was in the UK (Guernsey) for his Gap Year and his sister had gone to visit him and work in the same hotel as him for 3 months. I could not get hold of them as no one in the little town where we lived, nor the little industrial town where I worked, could understand English, nor my need to connect with my kids. So overtly worrying about your kids did not seem to me to be the Taiwanese way at that time. I spent so much time crying that eventually the secretary of the school I was working at – a young girl of about 20 years old - took pity on me and helped me to phone the hotel in Guernsey where the kids were working and thus speak with them via telephone. In the UK, my overriding story is about continuously being told how I am not good enough as I don't meet the gold standard of being trained as a clinical psychologist in the UK. This story magnificently permeated ***every*** job I had had. They loved the work I did, but I was just never 'good enough' due to where I was educated. I know that there are a myriad of good things that happened for me/us in the UK, but when answering this question, my spontaneous response is one informed by the not-good-enough part of my work-life as it contributed towards so much emotional pain and anguish and questioning of myself for me.

What <u>pulled</u> you towards migrating (made you consider migration as an option)?

Two things, really. One, we had always said that when the kids leave home, we (T & I) were going to buy a yacht and sail the seas. There was this magic that one day we were going to be 'free' to be explorers. Also, it was in a time when things were quite difficult in SA and T one day arrived, as usual, to do his job as GM of a computer software company, to be told by the security guard that he had been replaced by an Affirmative Action person. All companies had to have their quota of AA persons employed at each level. To this day many people in SA are still victims of the Employment Equity Bill. The irony of it all is, that I was involved in the development of the first draft of the EEB, as my consultation company had been contracted to input, in an advisory capacity, along with certain of the key role players involved with the development of the first draft of the EE Bill, which later became the EE Act.

What <u>pushed</u> you (eventually made you go) to migrate?

At the stage that we went to Taiwan, I was mainly involved with community development work in, mainly, Mitchells Plain in Cape Town. The income from the private practice that I ran on Tuesdays and Thursdays of every week was mainly used to fund this development work. When T was replaced at his job, there was no way in which we could maintain our standard of living on the income from my practice, even if I worked at full tilt seven days per week. Also, as I had said before, we had this dream of sailing the seas when the kids left home, so it partly gave us an excuse to embark on this dream we had so glibly spoken of for so long. I had a friend who had worked in Taiwan teaching English who urged us to go to Taiwan as the local legend was that if one lived frugally in Taiwan, you could very quickly make a lot of money. Taiwan did ***not*** agree with me and we came back to SA. I put my CV on the internet and was offered a job in the UK three days later. Two weeks after that we landed at Heathrow, not ever having considered the notion that T would also need to work during all the frenzy of getting to the UK, but just assuming that he would obtain employment with no problem whatsoever. He found it hard to be employed, though. However, we lived relatively well on the salary that I had earned. Not nearly as well as we had lived in SA, but well enough for new migrants. It was hard for T, though, to be in a foreign country, with no job and no connections and whilst he almost obsessively applied for jobs on a daily basis, not receiving any job offers. The IT sales market in the UK is *very* different to the IT sales market in SA, although one is selling the same product to the same kind of companies. Also, he did not have the business network in the UK that he had in SA, which really counted against him.

Why did you decide on the country you eventually migrated to? Was this country what you expected? How so?

We did not really decide on a country. It so happened that the country was decided for us. In both instances. Taiwan was not at all what we expected even though we had heard so many descriptions about various aspects about it. The culture, the food, the way of driving, ***everything*** was different. Being sick all the time did not help me adapt to the country either. I thought that, prior to leaving SA for the UK, that I ***knew*** the UK as I had grown up in the Eastern Cape Province of SA, which was rather colonial in its ways. The greater part of the English-speaking community where I had grown up had prided itself on its British heritage. We lived the *proper* English way, with high tea, gymkhanas, polo matches, cricket on the common every Sunday afternoon during the summer, picnics with cucumber sandwiches, my mother playing bridge with the ladies every Wednesday afternoon, I attended an English school where in my early school years we still sung God Save the Queen before starting the week's Assembly Meeting. We spoke in, what we thought was, 'received' English. Very posh. Surnames like Pringle, Jones, Webster, etc., abounded. Eton-like schools for boys were the norm as well as public schools for girls. We had six servants that 'did' for us in the house and the garden and I had a nanny until I was about ten or eleven years old. When I got to the UK, I found things to be rather dramatically different to what it was I had expected it to be. I had expected the UK to be much like the Eastern Province as I had remembered it. Little did I know that only the gentry lived in the way that I had come to know as a child. Furthermore, the way I had come to know was a rather adapted way of how the gentry really lived or spoke. I was shocked by how things were, on the surface, like they were in most other countries. We were told, before we went to Taiwan, that the persons of Oriental decent were rather unreadable in their facial expressions and would do much to avoid losing face and that one should never put them in a position where they might lose face as that would be the ultimate social blunder. My experience is that the English are masters at stoicism and keeping the stiff upper lip. I think they would excel at educating the Orientals with regard to this art. I never got to know what a person from the UK

thought when they communicated – not even after living there for nigh on ten years. They most often looked at you with these dead-pan faces; you would know that the gears were tumbling, but not how the gears were tumbling!
What were your hopes and dreams and desires for your migratory experience? Do you think you contributed to the country you migrated to and is your contribution in line with your hopes and dreams and desires about migrating?
Everything happened so fast in both instances, which lead us to not, I don't think, ever stop to think about any hopes, dreams or desires other than to make enough money to survive. Also, as I had said before, the countries chose us in a way. In the UK, we later dreamt, hoped and desired to own our own property and to gain British citizenship. Both these dreams materialised in some way. I now have British citizenship and we still own a property in the UK although neither of us now lives there permanently. I think that when one moves away from one's own country (country of origin), one tends to justify the reason(s) for doing so, even if you don't voice those reasons or are even aware of them. We were expecting a first world country rather than the third world country with first world aspects we had been living in. In many instances we were disappointed because bureaucracy remained in all instances wherever we went and was equally slow and tedious wherever we went.
What was going on in your life when you left your country of origin? What were some of the things you preferred for your life and what were some of the things you would have preferred to *not* have been going on in your life before you left?
When we left SA, T had been replaced by an AA person, which meant that we lost our way of living/our standard of life, which was quite high in quite a few respects. This was NOT preferred. In a way, it was not preferred that both the kids were out of the house at that stage, even though B (our daughter) was only down the road at university, she was still living in a university residence and away from home. J (our son) was in Guernsey and thus really away from home. We are such a very close family that this situation was not preferred. I supposed the discourse of 'empty nest syndrome' prevailed strongly at that time and in a way still does to this day, many years later. Preferred things were the fact that we lived a very good life. We had an awesomely beautiful home where we could hear the dolphins and whales talk, see them from our deck and watch them at play. J used to surf with them within touching distance. We had an extended network of friends. I loved my community development work and had a vast professional network. T belonged to a golf club and played almost every day. We all drove upmarket cars. We entertained at our home nearly every weekend. My office was on the bottom level of our three-level home built against the mountain and overlooking the False Bay, so I did not have to drive to go to work. We had a lady who cleaned, washed and ironed for us. We were all within the same time zones, so we could all communicate whenever we wanted. We could go out for meals whenever we wanted at whatever restaurants we wanted to. We were settled. We were a unit. The extended family was close by. We lived in the most beautiful of surroundings.
Would you go through the migratory process again? Why/why not? Who encouraged you to go?
I suppose if circumstances were different, we would never have migrated. We would have talked about it forever, but I don't suppose we would ever have done it. We were too comfortable in our circumstances. My father, though, had always told me: "The world is bigger than South Africa." I suppose in a way this made it easier for me to migrate when we were pushed to do so. Cape Town is a rather small economic environment. T would have struggled to have found a job at the same level as the one he had had. Also, it was the time for affirmative action, so few WAM;s (white Afrikaans males) were being employed anywhere in SA.

What did you find difficult and/or easy about the process of migration? What would you do differently if you were to redo the process again?

If I were asked now, after the fact, I can think about many things that I could have found difficult when we migrated, but it all happened so fast and I was so 'wanted' job-wise where we migrated to, that the process in itself was not at all difficult. In Taiwan, where both T and I had secure job offers before we left SA, we were well provided for in terms of housing. In the UK, my first employers had done everything they could to make sure that we would be comfortable and cared for when we arrived in their country. We had furnished homes etc. waiting for us in both countries. I would not go to Taiwan again as I was so sick there – both physically and emotionally with missing my children and not being able to contact them. I would have made sure that the place I was going to work at was legal and would actually pay my salary. I would have done more research about the culture we were stepping into. I would go to the UK again and probably will go back there in the near future. It was not good, on many levels, job-wise, but I liked living in the UK. I would, however, make sure that T had a job, too, before we left. I would take more time to consider the implications of what we were doing. The fact remains, however, that we would have had to move from our home anyhow with T being replaced by an AA employee in the way he was – we decided to move to another country. Rather extreme, but that is what we did.

What do you think the pros and cons of migration are in general? Would you encourage others to migrate?

This is a big question. It depends where you are migrating from and where you are migrating to. Whether you are doing so legally or illegally, whether you are forced to migrate or not, whether you have a job in the country you are migrating to and I think that your age at the time of migration is an important factor to take into consideration. Considering it on a macro level, I think the cons are about leaving a culture one knows, leaving the things you call your own and leaving your family.

The pros are about seeing new things and new opportunities; of venturing into the unknown and making it work – not falling into the victim role. I would encourage *every* young person to live in a different country/countries for a period of time, if it is at all possible. I am, however, very aware that I am speaking from a middle class position and that my circumstances are not the norm in the world.

What do you think the government of your receiving country should/could do to make it easier for you to be there?

I can't think what the Taiwanese could have done differently. Anyway, how the system worked, was that you would be issued with a visa, valid for 60 days and that you would renew this visa as and when necessary. The government of Taiwan thus regarded us as travellers and thus could not have been expected to do anything different to what they did: stamp our passports and allow us into the country.

The UK is another matter entirely. When we got to Heathrow Airport, we were ushered into a little room where we had to show all our documents, where the official on duty confirmed that we were not refugees, etc. Only then were we allowed through Passport Control. During our stay we were expected to write two tests. One test to satisfy the authorities that we could speak and understand English; the other test called the Life in the UK Test. Only if you passed those two tests were you allowed to apply to the UK Home Office for Indefinite Leave to Remain, which would in turn allow you to apply for British citizenship.
The book we had to study for the purposes of passing the Life in the UK Test should have been given to us in that initial office where we were questioned before we went through Passport Control. Life

would have been so much easier at first if we had had the information in that book as it tells you ALL you need to know about surviving in the UK. Another possibility is that centres could be instituted in the various towns/cities where foreigners could meet and form networks. The UK community is a rather isolative community, as many anthropological studies confirm. Life in the UK is a lonely life as one is not easily accepted into the inner circles of communal life. Most of our friendships were with other South Africans whom had migrated to the UK, especially whilst living in the London area. In the other areas where we lived, we lived lonely social lives. It has to be admitted, though, that we did not do much to seek social interaction.

CULTURE

(*e.g., the ways that people, living in different part of the world, classify and represent their experiences.***)**

When you think about growing up, can you think of one specific cultural tradition (e.g., birthdays) passed on to you by your family? What was the cultural flavour of the house you grew up in? What are some of the earliest memories of these cultural influences you can recall? Can you remember any rituals, celebrations or traditions of your family? What cultural values did your family teach you? Can you tell a story that would represent an illustration of the cultural ethos of your family?

We had many traditions that spoke of the culture of our family and thus, I imagine, to the culture of the circles my family moved in as the same rituals were repeated when we visited with other families. I do suppose that race and economics would influence cultural traditions within the same country. Sunday rituals spontaneously spring to mind. Firstly, I would go to Sunday School. My father would meet me outside the church and we would go to church together, where I received many pinches for being fidgety and being bribed with peppermints (which were eaten very surreptitiously!) to sit still. Then my father and I would get home, have tea and he would read the newspaper and listen to classical music on the record player, whilst my mother was in the kitchen putting the finishing touches to the Sunday afternoon meal the cook had prepared. We always had beef, lamb and chicken, rice, potatoes and vegetables with a cooked desert every Sunday. After the meal, everyone would have a nap or go to watch the cricket on the common or go to the gymkhana or polo during the summer. If we had had guests to lunch, the children would be expected to disappear – to go to play – whilst the adults had coffee and port. Most often we had guests to share our Sunday meal. If we were invited in return, the ritual would be much the same. The flavour of the house I grew up in was a rather liberal one as my father was an activist from the time I could remember, yet we upheld strong Dutch Reformed Calvinist beliefs. I ponder now how these two practices sat alongside each other. The earliest memories I can recall are ones of children being seen and not heard, being respectful to adults, saying please and thank you and being very aware of discipline. A child did not talk back. You did as you were told and you did not question why. The contradiction to how I was raised and how my father was a rather liberal activist, suddenly seems rather out of sync to me. My father refused to abide by the rules and regulations of *Die Broederbond* (The Brotherhood), a very strong and secretive Afrikaans survivalist group in South Africa. The Broederbond always reminds me quite a bit about what it is that one hears about the Masonic traditions. As he was not abiding to their dictums, our family was ostracized by the Afrikaans speaking section of the town where I grew up. My parents refused to give up their English speaking friends or the strong friendship associations they had had with the persons who frequented the University of Fort Hare, Alice, where people like Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu, and Albert Luthuli were educated. The fact that my father took a rather left wing stance to the apartheid happenings affected his business rather strongly, as we lived in a community where many of the

farmers were Afrikaans speaking and belonged to the Broederbond. For instance, the Afrikaans children whose parents belonged to *Die Broederbond* were punished for playing with me at school. I thus migrated to playing with the English speaking pupils at school and after school. Fortunately I attended a double medium school.

What cultural influences are still now important to you? How much of a factor in your life has your cultural background been?

I was raised in a home where activism was part of breathing. I find it instilled within my DNA. I find myself being at my happiest when I have a cause to fight for. My father was an exceedingly well-read and self-educated man. His wisdom, on so many levels, inspires me to this day. The biggest complement anyone could give me is to tell me that they think I come from a place where inner wisdom is evident. Yet, I find I have to daily fight his demonic work-ethic, which I witnessed from the day I was born until the day he passed on at 84 years of age. He never stopped. This work-ethic is something I continually judge myself by and I always fall short. I tend to judge others by the same measure. I don't ever measure up and few others do – very, very few. My cultural background influences my being-in-the-world.

Can you think of one specific cultural tradition or influence passed on to you by society in your country of origin?

Going to Sunday School and going to Church. There was no way you were going to get away from that until the day you were confirmed at 16 years of age. I now live by a certain spirituality, which often is informed by what else I find interesting along the way. My current spirituality is very far removed from and quite contra to what I was thought at Sunday School and at Church, but I cannot see myself being in the world without a spiritual place to revert to.

How did you experience the new culture you moved into? Difficult? Easy? What made it so?

Both difficult and easy. I could speak the commonly spoken language in the UK – English - yet I could not always play the language games of the profession I had moved into. In England they drive on the same side of the road as in South Africa and in the same kind of cars. In Taiwan you drive on the opposite side of the road. At that stage cars were few and far between and there were approximately 23 million scooters on the island. Astonishing! The cultural differences in Taiwan – food, language, music, friendship, and religion - were way removed from my comprehension even though I tried to learn Cantonese Mandarin, the dialect spoken in the area we were residing in. Taiwan was difficult. Nothing about Taiwan was easy, except entering through Passport Control. For me, thinking back, the most difficult part of living in England was never knowing what the person you were speaking to was thinking about what you were saying. Also, being constantly put down and criticised for not having been trained in the UK left me with a sense of not-enoughness and worthlessness irrespective of the many therapeutic and managerial successes I can tell of. I am still struggling about the ideas I now hold of myself as not being good enough.

How much of the culture you moved into did you absorb, do you think? Are you OK with what you absorbed? What did you absorb that you would rather now discard? Would you prefer to move away from your adopted culture back to your culture of origin? Why/Why not? What do you still find strange about your new culture? Could you tell a story or tell about an incident that would describe how you interacted with the other culture you now find yourself immersed into?

In Taiwan I absorbed the way one was taken care of in the Buddhist hospitals. I one day lay in a hospital bed in a ward of about 50 people. Each bed had a volunteer sitting beside that bed – either interacting with the patient or just sitting, depending on the patients' needs. I was astounded at such compassion and wanted to absorb that into my life and my way of being in the world. In the UK I absorbed the benefits of living in a first world country with all the benefits of a first world country,

e.g., public transport, communication, postal services, so many different things. I worked in Forensic Adult Mental Health Hospitals whilst I lived in the UK. I would like to discard the disregard, the harshness, that I now have for what is 'sacred' to others. Nothing shocks me anymore and swearing is just another set of words in common usage. I have been living in South Africa for the past seven months. My family all live in South Africa, except for my son who lives in Sydney, Australia. My husband went back to South Africa after the 2008/9 economic crash, as he was made redundant from his job, and along with thousands of others could not find another job and was then offered a very good job in South Africa. I lived without him in England for almost two years – a global marriage! After these past seven months, I now know I don't want to live in South Africa, although I probably will for the sake of my family. I want to live back in England. I absorbed the English culture rather easily. I accept their isolative ways, knowing that I did not go out of my way to make it different – I did not go out of my way to seek communities of friendship. I like the advantages of living in a first world country. I know that although I will forever get ridiculed about not having been educated in the UK, I will always have a good job, whilst there are no job opportunities for me in South Africa. The violence and corruption and lack of services in South Africa make it difficult for me to integrate back into the society. I still find the injustices perpetrated and the prevailing poverty hard to assimilate. A story would probably have to be the story of how every time, irrespective of which country I find myself in, I still speak about pounds! I get teased mercilessly by my family and friends about this way I have. And I get looked at by cashiers as if I have fallen from another planet! I get confused about the money I am handling as it physically looks different and I speak about pounds as I have done so for the past almost ten years. It is what is freshest in my memory.

What do you think the idea of culture includes? How would you describe it? If you had to write a definition about the concept of culture, what would that definition include?

According to me, culture includes, food, dance, music, religion, ways of doing (e.g., driving), language, rituals, common practices like going to the pub every day after work before you go home, the meaning one makes around certain ideas. It is also important to remember that cultures exist within cultures and that one cannot describe culture by considering the boundaries that enclose a country, county, city, town, or suburb.

Do you experience a sense of belonging/community in the country you migrated to? Does this community which you have now become part of include local people or did you gravitate more towards your 'own' people who lives in your new country?

Yes, I belong. During working hours, I belong to the community that makes up the place where I work. After hours, I gravitate towards fellow South Africans that live in the area I reside in as it is not my experience that one is easily invited to become immersed into English friendship circles. This, however, might have to do with age rather than other factors.

IDENTITY

(*e.g., how you would describe yourself.***)**

What in your adopted country shaped you the most in describing yourself as you would at the moment? Why do you think this shaped you in the way it has? What would you describe as the main things you learned about yourself whilst living in this culture different to your own?

Not enough, stupid, not measuring up, slave, not good enough, clown. Because I was trained in South Africa as a consultant psychologist (by choice) on the same programme as the clinical psychologists, I have always been looked down upon by the UK trained UK clinical psychologists as being a second class, less knowledgeable, entity. I did not reach/ascribe to the 'gold standard' of clinical training even though my clinical knowledge, work and success rate was most often rather higher than those of the 'gold standard'-trained UK clinical psychologists. As I made it my business

to be trained in management practices, I could manage a department of psychology along with the best managers, but as I was not UK-trained, I was not deemed fit to manage such a department. I learnt about myself that I could withstand their critique, that I had the gumption to carry on no matter what, and that I had the ability to have compassion with others who were going through the same experience and that I was indeed effective at my job and at managing a department. I learnt that more often than not, colleagues would seek me out to help them through their difficulties. I also learnt that psychiatrists would seek me out to ask my opinion about clients that were deemed difficult or hard to fathom. Yet, when it came down to decision time about head of department appointments, all the previously mentioned would not count in my favour. I would still be deemed as the not good enough outsider. They would not employ a head of department, expect me to 'do the job in the interim', be happy with how I ran the department, but would never formally appoint me as I was not of the gold standard. These decisions about not appointing me would be conveyed to me in a way that made me think of myself as a statue – an effigy without the normal range of feelings human beings often display. As if what they were saying was merely matter of fact information that was being imparted to me. I was not a human being with feelings – I was merely a cog in the wheel. Hence the notion of myself as slave. Somehow, I still believe about myself what 'they' believe about me …

What are some of the best memories about the culture you migrated to and do you hold some less preferable memories about this culture? Would you mind telling about a less preferable memory?

The best memory must be the day I received my British Citizenship. It had been a hard trudge, but I had done it. The freedom associated with being in possession of a passport other than a South African one is something only a fellow South African can fully comprehend. I had had no one to share the joy with, but I had done it. I attended the ceremony alone. I walked from the tea and cake the Mayor of Pontypridd had offered us to celebrate our becoming British citizens, to the Post Office, where it is that you apply for your British passport. When my British passport arrived on the Saturday, two weeks later – after a magnificently intensive interview at the Department of Homeland Affairs in Hounslow, London - I took the ferry to Calais on the Sunday, just because I could. I sat in the park in Calais for about three hours and meditated, had a lunch of mussels in a street café and took the ferry back to Dover. This was my celebration of my freedom of being in possession of a British Passport and for sticking it out and doing the 'work' that would allow me a British passport. I did this all on my own as I had no one to share it with. The latter is my less preferable memory. I would have loved it if both my husband and I could have gone through this ceremony together, but he was back in South Africa, working.

What did you accomplish in the country you moved to that you think you would not have accomplished in your country of origin?

In South Africa you don't have a hierarchy of psychologists. You are either one or you are not. In the UK, the highest level you can reach is that of consultant psychologist; that is before you start within the hierarchy of departmental heads, etc. One has to be rather well regarded and pretty senior to achieve this distinction and I had achieved it even though I was thought to be of a lesser order due to my 'inferior' training. I also managed various psychology departments during my time in the UK, although I was often not formally appointed in the position due to my lower class training. In South Africa being in an environment as those I was exposed to in the UK is not the norm. One normally employs oneself by means of a private practice and you carve for yourself a pathway that generates an income in whichever way it presents itself and where one's interest lies.

Do you think there is something that you would like the Authorities (e.g., United Nations, International Office of Migration, Governments) world-wide to know that might help migrants all over the world?
Yes. Migrants are people. Not statistics. May we please be treated as people and not as statistics?
When you left your country of origin, how would you have described yourself at that stage? How would one of the significant people in your life have described you at that time?
When I left South Africa, I would have described myself as successful within my area of Community Development, as attaining a certain reputation with the necessary authorities in my field of expertise – missing children/human trafficking, as well as being a knowledgeable clinician with a steady private practice. I know that within my career as a psychologist, I have never been happier than during the time when I was working as a person involved with Community Development. I know that it helped me grow as a person like nothing else in my life has ever done and I cherish the memories I carry from that time in my life. I am also aware that we have seasons in our lives and that that season was over at that time. It was probably time to move on and to acquire other knowledges. Significant others would probably have described me as someone rather important in the community, yet as being fearful that I might lose my life as I was working in very dangerous areas during all hours of the day and night.
How would you describe yourself now that you have migrated? How would one of the significant persons in your life now describe you?
I would describe myself as rootless. Floating. Not knowing where I belong. As being in-between. As wanting to be somewhere different to where my family wants to be, yet choosing my family above my own needs. I have been described by someone in my family as: "someone who is still chasing her own ass." Yet, there are others who would describe me as brave and an example of courage as I am setting out and doing the things I want to do for myself. I know that my husband and children would tell of their pride about the fact that I have pushed through and done what I have set out to do. I cannot even begin to think what my mother and father would have said if they were still in this life. I think they would have physically burst with pride about my achievements. I recall now how one of my teachers, during my final year of school, one evening came to my family home to inform my parents that my parents should not expect that I would pass high school. How sad I am that this man has passed onto the Great Beyond as the vicious part of my multiplicity would love to show him the various degree certificates I already have in my repertoire ….
Would you like to change anything about those descriptions you mentioned above? Who/what contributed the most to the change in the way you described yourself before you migrated and to your description of yourself now?
I would love to be able to change the descriptions of myself in the questions above, but I have lived for so long with this notion of not-enoughness that this still sits with me very firmly. I hope in time that I will be able to move onto other descriptions about myself. I can name each of the persons in the UK Clinical Psychology system who contributed to the description of myself as not-enough, but that would contribute to the thing I am striving most against in my life – the sense of Poor Old Me. It would be as if they had won and had actually attained the power over me they thought they had had if I acknowledge them and I won't give them that power over me. I have to honour my husband and children in helping me in the process of re-describing myself as someone worthwhile with a contribution to yet make, as well as my friends, especially Alta, Kat, Gita, Kate, Alet.

Are there times when you would describe yourself differently to the way you described yourself above? When would those times be and what would contribute to the descriptions about yourself that would be relevant at that stage?
Not at the moment. At the moment the Truths that The UK Clinical Psychologists told about me are still very prevalent in my life. It might be that as I complete this PhD process and I start re-engaging myself with Community Development work across Africa I so desire to do that I might start describing myself differently. Yet, I want to remain humble. Humble, but not destroyed by another person's Truth about me that in actual fact is not a Truth, but only an opinion held by someone who speaks from only one set of knowledges.
Do you think different descriptions of yourself are true for you about yourself at different times in your life/day and when different circumstances prevail?
Yes, I do think that when I am with people that engage in the same language game as me, I see glimmers of myself as a person other than that which I have been described as during the past nigh on ten years. I know that when I am with my family and close friends, I am regarded as someone with an opinion worth taking into account.
How would you describe your personal identity or sense of self after your stay in your new country? Would this description be different to how you would have described yourself before you migrated?
I would now describe myself as insecure, worthless, knowledgeless, not-enough. Before I left South Africa I was reasonably sure that I could quite comfortably conquer the world. Now I am fearful and afraid of being caught out and found wanting. Of not knowing. I am afraid people might think I am a fraud.
... and finally ...
Did we leave anything out that you would have liked to discuss during this 'conversation'? Please tell any other stories which you think are important and representative of the process of migration between countries.
I would have liked you to have asked me what I thought identity was. Whether I even thought there was such a thing as an identity. What would contribute to an identity and what would take away from an identity and whether one's identity could shift over time.
Can you think of any other questions which should have been included in this 'conversation'?
Possibly questions about how I think I could begin the process of re-describing myself if my description of myself had not been a preferable one and what it is that I would like that description to say. I think also a question about how I found the process of completing this story guide. Also, whether completing the story guide had shifted any of the previous knowledges, thoughts and/or ideas I had held.

GROUP INTERVIEW WITH

GABRIELLA (Hungarian**)**
DANIELLE (Egyptian-Jewish**)**
GITA (Polish-Jewish**)**

MARGOT: How does this thing of migration form us as people? I want to understand what it is that happens to us as people when we move from one culture into another culture. Do we change? Do we become more of who we are? Do we become a little bit of who we are and something else?
GABRIELLA: I think this is really hard to answer. People change over time. I think it is a co-frontier because you don't know if you changed because you immigrated. Or you changed because you are changing. Changes are part of life anyway. And sometimes I'm thinking that it happens that I feel lonely here. But I am thinking hmm, I have a sister in Hungary who never immigrated, who is a similar age as me, she is lonely over there. Maybe it comes with adulthood, that when you are young, and you are a teenager, you have a bunch of friends. But then everybody gets married and they focus on their own kids, and they don't get together as much. There is not much conversation. So maybe it is just part of life, that when you are forty or so, or more, you don't spend so much time with friends. Sometimes I don't know, is it because I immigrated? Or is it because I am in midlife and I am not young anymore?
DANIELLE: I don't have that. I feel very different from other people. But the question that came into my mind was; does it make a difference at what age you immigrated? Because I was three years old. But despite that, the original culture is somewhat strong.
MARGOT: How would you describe somewhat strong?
DANIELLE: In the sense that I can't say that I am Egyptian. But there are a lot of differences that make me stand out from Canadians, from other Canadians, from North Americans. There are cultural differences. Me being Jewish as well, there are many different cultures that are involved.
MARGOT: How would you describe yourself?
GABRIELLA: I am Canadian.
DANIELLE: When I was a teenager in the early seventies in Quebec, the movement of nationalism was coming up. So the frank abolishment was very strong. And the question that was on everybody's mind was: Are you French or are you English? Are you Francafond or are you Englafond? And I would say no, that I am Canadian. I'm not French Canadian, I'm not English Canadian, I am Canadian. No, no, you have to make a choice, are you French Canadian, or are you English Canadian? And I would say, well I wasn't born here. Ok where were you born? I was born in Egypt. Oh, so you are Egyptian? I said no I'm not Egyptian, I am Canadian. I found that the moment I said "I'm Jewish" all questions stopped, as if being Jewish was an identity, was a culture. But it is not a unique culture in my mind. That is not how I identify myself. I was born in Egypt. I have an Askansi father and a Sephardic mother, which means Eastern Europe and North Africa. So, the cultures are extremely different coming to North America.
MARGOT: So you would then say that you are a citizen of the world, rather than a citizenof a specific region or country.
DANIELLE: Well at the moment I'm a citizen of Canada because that is the nationality that I hold. My passport is Canadian. And if I were to go outside of Canada, I would probably say I'm Canadian. But within Canada it is a different issue.
GITA: I don't know if outside of Quebec they would have such a strong questioning attitude, because I get the same thing with French Canadians. "So would you consider yourself Jewish or Canadian?" And I know I would have a hard time.
DANIELLE: Jewish is not a nationality.

GITA: No. They would talk about being Jewish as if it was an identity, and it's not. So it is not an easy question to answer. But I think in Quebec they have these assumptions about what it means to say I am this or I am that. Which don't count for other people. And they don't get [you] when you are giving them a hard time about not answering their question. They asked Danielle the question and insisting on her saying whether she is French Canadian or English Canadian. And she would say she is neither. And if they would say "where you are from?", she said Egypt, and they would say you are Egyptian, she say no I'm not Egyptian either. And she got a father from East Europe, and a mother from North Africa.
GABRIELLA: So your answer is neither?
DANIELLE: No I found that when I said I would tell people that I was Jewish the questions stopped.
GABRIELLA: So you picked one out of the many?
DANIELLE: But it's not a nationality.
GABRIELLA: It doesn't need to be a nationality. You could have said I am a woman. Or you could have said I am whatever.
DANIELLE: I am not religious.
GABRIELLA: I know very little about Judaism. But I think in my mind Jewish is not just a religion. Jewish is being educated, being smart, having interest in art. You like kids, being very free.
DANIELLE: Not necessarily. I can show you some Jews who are not like that at all.
GABRIELLA: I think when people think of Judaism, they don't think the religion *per se*. They think a bunch of qualities together.
GITA: Everybody has a different idea of what a Jew is.
MARGOT: My identity for me lies in the fact that I am a woman, in the fact that I am from Africa, in the fact that I hold certain things true about myself. But I also know that when people consistently ask me where I'm from when I stand at the checkout, that that differentiates me. That makes me different. That draws my attention to the fact that I don't belong. What are your experiences about that?
GABRIELLA: I actually had an experience at the American border. They asked for passport and they said "citizenship?", and I said Canadian. And the American officer said "A born Canadian or just another kind?" And I said "The other kind." He asked that, and he said, "Pull over." He just checked, but that's that. So if you identify yourself as Jewish, and I have an idea about Jewish people, and you said no, no, no, what you are saying is not necessarily true. I'm curious to know, how do you think about being Jewish? What is being Jewish to you?
DANIELLE: For me it is a religion. There are people who are very observant, and there are people who are less observant.
GITA: No, not for me at all.
GABRIELLA: So what is it for you?
GITA: It is a culture.
DANIELLE: The culture is to your opinion, can vary from country to country. A Hungarian Jew will not eat the same things as a Polish Jew or a Russian Jew. And then the people from Morocco are not the same as the people from Tunisia or from Egypt.
GITA: But a Jew from anywhere, when they meet, when they say "I'm Jewish." There is a connection of being Jewish, regardless of religion or culture.
GABRIELLA: And what do you think what makes that connection? If not the food what they eat, not the place where they are from, not necessarily their religion?
GITA: I talked to so many people about what it is you know. It is a big question among the Jews – "What is a Jew?" I think it is a way of being. I really do.
GABRIELLA: Meaning what?

GITA: It is a kind of a soul. There is a term for a person who is a mensch, striving to be a mensch, striving to be a good person. Good and wise, a decent person.
GABRIELLA: Wouldn't you think that a South-African or a Hungarian who believes I'm Canadian would not have [made] that comment?
MARGOT: I think it might be for me about a shared knowledge, that when I speak about mensch as another Jewish people, I immediately know what it is that you mean about mensch. For me when I go back to South-Africa, I had to put on a very specific T-shirt and go to a very specific rugby game. And nobody outside of those photographs would understand exactly what that meant. What that T-shirt means. And what all the archetypes underpinning that T-shirt is about.
DANIELLE: Having said that, when we came to Canada we moved a couple of times and eventually we settled in Montréal. And I went to a public school, elementary school, which at the time was probably 75% Jewish. And I felt just as much an outsider there as anywhere else. I came from a different culture. I wasn't born there. English was not my first language. I had to learn it. Because the school system in Quebec was such: There was the Catholic system and the provincial school board. And the Catholic school board was French and the provincial school board was English. So if you were not Catholic you had to go to the provincial school board. That was the law. I was French speaking, so I had to learn English to go to school.
GITA: What an imposition.
MARGOT: So are we really then talking about categorization?
DANIELLE: I think people would actually want to put you in a category, in a box, that you have to fit in something that people will understand and know. And if you are outside of that it's harder for them to understand.
GABRIELLA: Going back to the question, you asked me what I am, and I said Canadian. The more I think what it is, the more I think I am an Ottawan. And I can tell you why. It is interesting that in Canada people don't really see the Canadian culture, because everybody is from everywhere. But there is a distinctive Canadian culture that I believe in. It's that everybody is from everywhere. People have totally different views. Yet they function together somehow fairly well. Which is amazing. And for some reason people don't appreciate that. But if I think of in Hungary I would see that diverse people would never work together. They would never have survived together. But in Canada they can. And sometimes I think that people who live fairly, not as aggressive as Americans, like tolerant and not as aggressive, end up in Canada. So I think certain type of people feel comfortable here. They came from many places, but there is something similar in their mentality somehow. That is what I think. And the reason I said Ottawan and not Canadian, is because I think what attracts me, or makes me feel at home here, is I find that larger percentage of the population educated here, not in Canada, but in Ottawa, than in other cities, which makes me feel more at home. Because I lived in other cities in Ontario, and there are places where I did not feel at home at all. So I think I would never like to leave Ottawa because of that. Because I feel the size of the city is right, and the kind of people, and it is fairly modern. Yeah, they keep distance, which I don't like, but certain things I can overlook. So when I came, at the beginning, for a long time, five years probably maybe longer, I could not answer this question that easily. I had really hard time at Christmas time and felt really far from my family. But the Hungarian culture is very negative. People are always negative in Hungary. And sometimes I think it has to do with the communism. Because during communism you had to downplay everything. Whoever had more money or more power, that person had to do something under the table, or something sneaky. So therefore people always downplayed things. How are you? Oh don't ask me I am feeling very bad. My cat died. My wife burned the dinner. But people are always negative. And what I like about Canada is that here people are optimistic, they're resilient. I spent 27 years in Hungary, and I have now spent 21

years in Canada. And just, I would say, maybe the last eight, ten years I feel really at home. So it was not like I came here, and it was like "I am Canadian". No it didn't go like that. At the beginning when we came we had no idea what we were doing, what this country was all about. I didn't speak the language at all. I spoke like three words in English "Thank you" and "Yes." And I don't even know, like I'm not for sure it's that important for me to know what is the name - the title - of the category that I belong to. Because in certain things I believe what we did in Hungary is better. I kind of associate myself in some of those ideas. And then there are a bunch of stuff I associate myself with the Canadian culture. So I am all over, because Canada is very open-minded; Hungary was very like "No, no, no!" It took me some time. It didn't come right away. But I think I'm Canadian.

MARGOT: Are you ok with being Canadian? Are there times when you would prefer to think of yourself as Hungarian?

GABRIELLA: No.

MARGOT: And what made that difference? What helped you to transition?

GABRIELLA: How did I end up feeling Canadian? I don't know. I think language was a big deal, because the language helped me to understand people and their values, and their way of thinking around me. And when I came I didn't speak the language. So I had no idea. I just saw things on the surface. Still I don't get the subtleties, because this is a second language, so I will never get the subtleties. Language is one. I think I was lucky because when I came I didn't speak, and in about 18 months I started university. So right away I was put into a university environment where most people are open-minded. There is no racism. There is no "you are different than me, therefore I am better that you", so right away I was in an environment where I felt accepted. And I never felt, you know, I looked with a different eye. And I spend so many years at university, and in the meantime I learned the language. And plus I think the initial fact that I did not like the Hungarian negativism. Like everything and anything about Hungary is negative. If you look at our anthem, it's negative. You look at anything. And when you go back to Hungary people are always complaining, complaining. It's like, can you tell me something that is positive or optimistic or nice. Maybe because of my personality I'm more bubbly and charged up, and positive, and optimistic. Maybe it is a better match. So it is possible so that my personality are much more comedian. You know, keep your head up, look around and go ahead, and let's go for it and don't focus on negative things. I think it is a combination of different things. I don't know. I think I am just lucky, because I feel comfortable in the city. I felt comfortable at the university, the people around me. I was only told I think once or a couple of times during the 21 years to go home, or go back. So generally speaking, people were nice to me. I don't know what else to say. I think that is about it. How did I transition? What made me to become a Canadian from a Hungarian? And I think another factor is my son, because my son was born here. So he is a born Canadian. I think it is very important for him to belong to one place. And even for me it was very important to feel that I'm not in between. I'm not this and that and neither here nor there. I'm here and that is what I am. Sometimes I feel it's like, in my case it was like, when you get married, like when you are born, you are born into a family. You have your mommy or dad and your siblings. And you love them, and that's who you are. And then when you reach a certain point, you choose another family. It's your husband and you are going to have kids, and you leave that family, just like I left my country. And I feel good about being at the new place with my new family, and my husband and kids. Yet I love them, but still I belonged here, because that's what my choice was like. I kind of see something about a relationship between living Hungarian and becoming Canadian. How I left my mom and my dad and chose my husband and my new family.

MARGOT: Did you experience a sense of transitioning? Or was it something that just subliminally happened for you?
DANIELLE: When I came to Canada? It is difficult to tell, because I was three years old. And I have no memories in fact before the age of eight.
MARGOT: So it was just a process?
DANIELLE: A very bad process. It wasn't our choice to immigrate. It's a choice to come to Canada, as it was to Europe. But it ended up being a very difficult one. So a number of different experiences that was very hard, lot of hardships. And it didn't start turning around until I was about seven years old.
MARGOT: And you remember that?
DANIELLE: I had to reconstruct the memories, because there were none.
MARGOT: And when you think now about being here, of having been given the opportunity to come here, is that something that sits well with you, or is it more of wanting to have rather gone somewhere else?
DANIELLE: No, I think Canada is particularly… I think we're particularly fortunate I think to live in this country for many, many different reasons; obviously economically, but culturally as well. There was a difference you know, even though we were in North America. Everybody knows about the American migrant part. I have cousins who were from Egypt, but their family immigrated to the United States. They have integrated. They have become a part of the American mountain part. And their children are American. Whereas here in Canada we have always, no matter what culture you came from, were somehow allowed to, or maybe it was intentional, to keep our original culture. To be who we are, to keep that culture. And it is really a multi-cultural country, I think, as opposed to a migrant part.
GABRIELLA: I think, I agree with you that we are a mosaic, not an American part, but still a certain degree, because, no matter what, you have to take the culture of the country where you are. Keep your personal space, you don't interrupt each other. So there are basic rules that to function in a group, we all have to follow. You know, your husband cannot beat you up, even though in your original culture that's ok. So I think we keep our original culture till a certain degree. Certain things you have to modify.
DANIELLE: You are right, but I guess because I have been here since I was a baby, to me those things are second nature to me now. It's part and parcel of who I am. I have integrated that culture from the very beginning. In the North American culture it's common for a child which is university age, to go away to a university. Or to move out of the house at you know, 18, 19, 20, you move, you leave home. It's natural. In the culture I come from it's not natural. You do not leave home, especially if you are a girl, until you get married. So when I left home at the age of 25, it was a disaster. It was catastrophic.
MARGOT: Would you mind saying more about catastrophic? Was it catastrophic for you? Was it catastrophic for your family? Was it catastrophic in terms of society? How was it catastrophic?
DANIELLE: I've seen my mother cry twice in my lifetime. Once when her brother died and once when I left home.
MARGOT: So you really felt wanted when you left home?
DANIELLE: No, I felt that I was definitely letting her down. I think she had a much more difficult immigration experience. And as a consequence, she attached herself to me. So there was no individuation. And having moved at the age of three, which is where the individuation begins, made it very difficult.
MARGOT: So if she was here with us having this conversation, she would be telling very different stories?
DANIELLE: Oh, undoubtedly, if she were capable of it.
GABRIELLA: Something just came to my mind. Like Danielle started to talk about her mom, I was seriously thinking about the question of how I ended up becoming Canadian. I think in my story what

also helped me to become Canadian, is that my father is a self-made man, who is very successful in a small town where he lives. I felt that no matter what I have done in that small town, I never got recognition for my successes. [People said] "because she is so and so's daughter, of course she has this, or of course she has that, or of course she would be more whatever." So I think in my story I had to move far away. My father's hand could not reach this far, and I could become my own. When we came, we came with four suitcases. I was 27 with my husband. We landed in Toronto and we had no idea where we were going to sleep on the first night. And we ended up spending time with one of my sister's classmate who was visiting Canada. So she does not live here. And we stayed in her apartment in Toronto that has no furniture. We had nothing, no furniture, no bed, no mattress, and no nothing. So we slept for three months on the floor. And I just had a coat we covered ourselves with. But I enjoyed it, because I felt that it's just like camping. It's not about freedom. I felt that it's an adventure. At the time I didn't even know we were immigrating. We just came for a trip to look around, because the iron curtain was still down, so we were given the chance to come. And I felt I want to see what's going on here. So I didn't find it hard even though I started working for somebody and being her maid for two years, and cleaning her house for two years with an engineering degree in my pocket, because I felt this is just like adventure, this is so cool, this is so different. Later on I had this feeling that we are high and far away. So whatever I do is my achievement, and nobody can tell me that this was something that was fixed by my family. So I think that also made the whole deal sweet. Of course I like this, of course I belonged here. When I went to university I did my honours, I did my masters, I graduated, I was on the honours list, got on the list, I got into IBM. Of course I belonged here, because this is what I did. So I think that's what made it easy in my case. It's a good match, plus I had other factors.

MARGOT: So it's our personal stories that contribute to whether we would make it or not make it, or how it is that we would identify ourselves within a certain situation?

DANIELLE: I was thinking if my mother would tell a different story, and I think that my sister would tell a different story. There is 12 years difference. She was a teenager when we came. It is a huge difference. She did most of her schooling here. But what I find interesting is that she married somebody who is also originally from Egypt. Her son and daughter who are both born in Canada married. My nephew married somebody who was Canadian of Lebanese origin. And my niece married a man whose family came from Egypt, although he was born in Canada. And they are all very successful marriages.

GABRIELLA: But I think it's the story of the T-shirt. I put this T-shirt on, and everybody knows what it means. They have the culture; they understand certain things that people from other cultures don't. That's what I think. Like, I am feeling this lately because I'm going to a Hungarian school with my son. I had a girlfriend who was Hungarian and went back to Hungary. And now I should find more friends. And where is the biggest chance to find more friends for me? In the Hungarian school; the parents of the kids, because I don't need to explain the T-shirt. I don't need to explain anything. And it was interesting because a couple of weeks ago I got to know somebody by chance in the hallway. Her girlfriends were late and she was by herself. And I was standing by myself. So we started to talk. And she said while the kids are in school they used to go to a place - to a sister's place - with her girlfriends. Am I interested or not? And I said sure we could go. She said you know what; they have that Danish cheese, the real Danish cheese that tastes just like Hungarian. And I thought I have had the Danish cheese so many times, and I just went in to eat that and nothing else. And she is telling me the same, because she recognizes the different cultures. So maybe I think that I have a better chance to find a friend within the Hungarian parents, because they understand. They pick out that single item in a store that she just picked out. So it's about the little connections.

DANIELLE: You don't have to explain anything. The understanding is there.

MARGOT: And when we go somewhere, whether it is you, Danielle, that has been here since you were three years old, or you Gabriella, but still I'm picking up that there is some sense of differentness. Is it about the sharing when you meet someone that is like you; someone that has the same knowledge? Is it about an instinctive sharing of knowledge and experience?
GABRIELLA: So what you are saying is we are not the same because we don't have the sharing?
MARGOT: No, no. I'm saying that you go to your Hungarian school …
GABRIELLA: Yeah, so I have that.
MARGOT: …and you have that immediate sharing.
GABRIELLA: Yes.
MARGOT: So the things that make us feel different as immigrants …
GABRIELLA: That we don't have the sharing.
MARGOT: … is that we don't have that sharing with the other people that are born here.
DANIELLE: When I did my MBA, the group of people that I have associated with were all from different nationalities. We all had something in common, even those who were born in Canada. There was one guy who was born in Canada, but with Italian origin. So there were some cultural differences, or something that made us all understand that there was a different experience.
MARGOT: What do you think contributes to the fact that you are surviving in Canada away from where it is that you were born in Hungary?
GABRIELLA: In my case, I had the drive to accomplish something on my own, because [in Hungary] I never got the recognition. No matter what I did, and how I did it, I never got the recognition. So, I had this drive, and I think that helped me. I totally believe the fact that I was accepted into university right away, helped me. Because, I felt that I got appreciation for my comments or my thoughts. Even though at the beginning, the first year, or year and a half, I went through cultural shock. I had that time period. You don't feel it right away. It took me maybe eight months where I did not want to talk to anybody. Because, I knew if I opened my mouth they will know that I am not one of them. So, I never wanted to speak in English to anybody on the street. Because, as long as I just stood there and smiled, they didn't know that I am different. But as soon as I opened my mouth, they could find out from the accent that I am not one of them. So, I went through that. But at the same time, because I started university in about less than two years, at university they were very accepting, they listened to me, and if I had a good idea they said it's a good idea. So I got lots of positive feedback. And I think it also helped that I spend seven years, because I did my honours and my masters just after each other. For seven years I had that environment. So, I think that helped me too.
DANIELLE: For me it is a personality thing. But, it was the belief that I could give. I think there's a…, I'm a natural-born optimist. I just believed that there is light at the end of the tunnel. I suffered from chronic depression my entire life. That eventually developed into major, major depression, and I was quite ill for quite a number of years, and on medication. And, I, just…, and at some point didn't know whether I would make it. But I think deep down there was always a belief that there was something on the other side. So, and that's a personality. I don't think that's cultural.
GABRIELLA: Sometimes I think that many of the people who would chose to immigrate have that mentality. In a case of refugee it may be a different story. And because of that the whole make of the country is different. Because, we have more driven optimistic, positive people who are not afraid to make the change. Not afraid to make the move. And then they have kids, and their kids inherit the same personality. So again I think proportionally we have more positive driven people.
DANIELLE: And I think, one word that comes to mind is courage. What I'm thinking of, and when you say what triggered in me, the reason we came to Canada is my father, who was an engineer, an electrical engineer and a PhD in physics. We came to Canada because he met somebody in Egypt who

offered him a job to come. They didn't know anything about it. My mother's entire family, save one brother, was all in Europe. So my mother was dead set against coming to Canada. But he wanted to come to Canada. So he, at the age of 40 moved his family, you know, aging parents, wife, teenage daughter and a baby, 10 000 miles, or whatever it was, to something completely unknown. And we didn't move to a big city. We moved to a tiny little town in Quebec where there were two Jewish families. So that took guts. That absolutely took guts, took courage. And when I moved from Montreal to Ottawa, which doesn't seem a lot, it's 200 kilometres. But I lived all my life in Montreal. So, for me to move, I think also took guts. So I think of my father often. To me it's also like immigration. The culture in Quebec is so very different from here in Montreal. And I have had to establish in relationships and everything. I have that immigrated memory of my father doing the same thing, and having the drive to do that.

MARGOT: And being a brave, courageous person in the process.

DANIELLE: Yeah, that's what it feels like.

GABRIELLA: But see, you were asking about what made us successful. I think that the picture is not as one-sided. Because, I think that in certain areas I am successful. But there are areas of immigration that is like a big dark side of immigration. I lost my whole family, except my husband and my son. So my mom, my father, my sister, and all of my relatives are in Hungary. And my neighbours and my classmates, and sometimes I feel my whole past. Because when I go home, I know people on the street. I walk around and I know every single person who lives in the houses, because in Hungary people don't move. You live in a house, you get a house, and you die in the house. So, everybody knows everybody. Even though I might be successful at work, or at school, or at certain areas, but I lost my family totally, my friends. And sometimes I think my whole past, which is good in some perspective, because I lost my father's influence. And everything happens because of him. And I am glad that he is not in my life. But there are other things that I lost. What I want to say is just that the picture is not as one sided. We gained and we lost.

DANIELLE: Absolutely. And there is mourning. And there is a grieving. And that is there. It's part of who you are. I totally agree. Even though I was only three years old, you'd think but no, I grieve, I mean I grew up here and saw what life is like. So I still grieve for that.

GABRIELLA: How often does it happen that we have such an experience that somebody walks in and I know that that person…

MARGOT: We come into contact with someone and we know that we know that we know. And does that happen because we share an identity, or a culture, or another knowing? Or is this about something else? And do we just share it with somebody that comes from the same culture as us, or do we share it with other people?

GABRIELLA: See, I don't know. Right now I'm trying to think if I would go into a room and somebody would come in who is Hungarian, or another person who would come in Canadian, what would I feel? Or have I ever felt anything special? Can I tell them? I think I can tell a Hungarian more than Canadian. I can pick up Canadian in the middle of an ice skating rink, because nobody skates better than that Canadian. Not always, but generally speaking. You know like, oh, I'm into hockey, and it's like somehow it's people who you would never even think is into hockey. Like, certain characteristics I could pick out, but to have real like deep soul experience based on the culture. I don't know if I ever had such a dramatic experience that you had. But maybe it has to do with the fact that you were in another country, or you where somewhere else. You were in England, and you really wanted to be in Africa, and then suddenly somewhere on the globe you met an African. It's like this is where I belong. These are my people.

DANIELLE: You know what that brings to mind, is that one is always searching. I'm always searching for my identity. It goes back to the very beginning, to the very first question. You know, I'm always searching for my identity. I still don't know how to define myself.

MARGOT: And has that got something to do with the fact that you are now here, and you originated somewhere else? Or is that just because you are always searching?

DANIELLE: I think, I'm coming to the conclusion that that's just who I am.

GABRIELLA: But see, now I'm thinking of you saying I have seen a person and I thought that person is one of my people. Like Gita. With Gita I feel lots of connections. Yet, I don't think she feels Canadian. I feel Canadian. I don't know I am responding to Gita as I would respond to one of my people, because she might not feel Canadian. So even though I feel Canadian, she is not Canadian, then is she one of my people? I don't know. But with Gita I find connections because of the culture, interest in art, interest in theatre, interest in museums. And she is very free. And she doesn't care. And she doesn't care about formality, which I love. She doesn't try to be appropriate. And I like that. I see so much formality, and distance, and trying to be following the rules. I don't know then what's in between me and Gita. Because, I think Gita is a special person for me, because she is my first Canadian friend. And I don't use the term "friend" like she does sometimes, I think. But I need a lot of time, and a lot of experiences. I started to call her my friend last year in my head, and I've known her for ten years. And I always liked her, but I didn't call her for a long time in my head as a friend. Now I do. So I don't know. I never had that experience that you had.

DANIELLE: Except that she is not Canadian originally.

GABRIELLA: Yeah, she's not Canadian, and I don't know if she feels Canadian, because maybe she feels something else.

DANIELLE: It's a different issue, where she is the child of a survivor. So it's a different issue.

GABRIELLA: Gita, are you Canadian? What are you?

GITA: Me, I'm Canadian.

GABRIELLA: How do you feel?

GITA: Well lately I feel kind of Israeli.

GABRIELLA: There we are. So one of my persons is Israeli, yet I feel Canadian. This is messy.

GITA: Wherever I am, that's what I am.

MARGOT: What do you think the effect of migration is on your identity and your sense of self? Sense of who you are.

GABRIELLA: When you say migration, you say my immigration?

MARGOT: Yes your migration from one country to another. How does that impact how you experience yourself?

GITA: As an outsider.

DANIELLE: Totally.

GITA: I'm a Jew.

DANIELLE: Totally. Always an outsider.

MARGOT: Always different?

DANIELLE: Always.

GABRIELLA: See, I can't say that. I can say for a long time I felt this. I can say that in certain situations, especially when I talk and I can't express myself well. I'm just like, I can't talk, this is so hard, and why can't I just feel part of the conversation like anybody else. But, I don't always feel outsider. I feel at home. Maybe I'm the lucky one. I feel good, and I feel at home. And I don't regret it. And I don't want to go back. I miss my family, but I want them to come here more than I want to go back.

MARGOT: So for you it's about sharing what you have? Not about retracing your steps?
GABRIELLA: Yes.
GITA: It's not a question of going back.
DANIELLE: It's not about regret. I don't think it's about regret.
GITA: You know it's kind of like the other side of the coin of being a global citizen, and a citizen of nowhere, because if you're a global citizen, you're a citizen of nowhere.
GABRIELLA: I went to English as a Second Language school here, since I didn't speak English, I had to learn English, and I met lots of immigrants, people from various countries who had immigrated to Canada. And, I have seen many families, one - divorcing, too - one wanted to stay, the other wanted to go back. They were not happy here, they went back. One was happy here, but the other wasn't. Even in Samuel's school there is a boy whose mom was born in Canada, but her parents came from somewhere else. I think both of the parents are Hungarians. The woman married a man who is Canadian, and now they went to live in Hungary, because the man - who is Canadian - wanted to live in Hungary. The man is happy. The man wants to settle. And the woman came back. And they took the kids back- and forward.
DANIELLE: I think that's very common and not just of immigrant experience, but of people who we look into a lot. I work for a company that specializes in relocation. I help the spouses of relocated families to find jobs. It is interesting because I had one client for a year, who had lived in Canada, who had lived in Toronto. Then went to live in France, and then went to live in England, and then came back to Toronto. The city was not the same as she remembered it. The people were different. Everything was different. And she had a very hard time re-adapting again. I mentioned that to my sister; her husband is an engineer who was stationed all over the world. She moved with him and the family. Coming back, she said the same thing. Coming back is never easy. I have another friend who is German, who I met in school when I went to the south of France, who got married, and then moved to Japan, because that's where her husband was stationed. They lived in Japan for five years. They just moved back to Germany, and she is having a very hard time re-adapting to Germany. And it's her country. It's where she was born.
GITA: I don't know if this is connected, but I left Judaism because I found it so narrowly focused, and I wanted to be a citizen of the world. I had a friend who was converting to Judaism. In her class were a number of Jews who were going through the converting process, even though they were Jewish, just so that they could learn what it was to be Jewish, because like me, they have left the culture, their religion. They had no understanding of their background. And, I am actually thinking I have got this huge gap now. What was so fascinating was learning the history which I was not familiar with. And these are my roots. As I left my roots, and I'm familiar with it, I kind of feel like I need to recreate my identity and my roots, and maybe do a converting process or learning process of what is my background. And, of course the holocaust also killed off the Polish culture of my parents, the culture that they had in Europe. And many people who were trying to recreate that culture were Hungarian. By the way, the synagogue has opened up in Hungary. This friend of mine just said, who went to it, it's going to be reconstructed to the original synagogue. This people are trying to reconstruct the old world. Even though it's gone, and even though the religion is ancient and has no meaning anymore to me, understanding what it's all about has become more important.
GABRIELLA: I had a couple of experiences with going back. When I went back for the first visit to Hungary, after two years being in Canada, I was told by one of my friends, there was a discussion, and I said something, and she just turned to me and said "What do you even know about this discussion, you don't live here." And it's like, I'm 29, I spent 27 years in this country and two in Canada. How can you tell me that I don't understand this topic, this discussion about Hungary? I left for just two years. Then I

was one. Then I was stunned, and especially it was not a stranger, it was somebody who knows me. And then secondly, I went back again and again and again for visits. And every time I went back people asked me: "So tell me about Canada. Do you like to be in Canada? And tell me about Hungary, like are you ok to be at home? What do you feel?" And every single time I told the people what they wanted to hear from me is: "It's so nice to be back to Hungary, and it's so not nice to be in Canada." As soon as I started to say something positive about Canada, I could see on people's faces that that's not what they expected. So after a while, I don't know, say for visits, I decided to lie. So when other people said: "Oh, how is Canada?" I said: "It's ok." "How about Hungary, how do you feel at home?" "Oh, I love it here." Because I thought, I don't want to put up with this again and again. There was an expectation. So it's not just a profession, but you can get it from your friends and anybody that you meet, that they expect you to say something…

GITA: Everybody does love their country, and wants you to love their country. It's like a continuum. One of the reasons I left Judaism, and one of the reasons I like Canada, is it's not a very highly chauvinistic country like the States. I don't like overly patriotisms. Given the voice of the world, too much patriotism makes me very nervous. So I like Canada.

DANIELLE: It's how I feel about what just happened this week, the assassination. It's off-topic, but you talked about patriotism. It reminds me of the Americans.

MARGOT: What do you think gives you cultural identity?

DANIELLE: Food, music.

GITA: Food is so important, and music, so important.

GABRIELLA: History, literature.

GITA: Art.

GABRIELLA: Yeah, all of that.

GITA: Music - and chauvinists know that. You know, they will use music. Even though I don't like the states enough, [when] I listen to the American anthem, or the Canadian anthem, or the Israeli, any anthem in the world, I will cry. It's like salt and sugar that they put into the food that we were talking about that makes you addicted. They put the stuff into this music to make you patriotic, a mixture of salt and sugar.

GABRIELLA: See, for me the culture is a lot about values. Values I think are very important. How you think about family [and] raising kids. How you think about divorce. How you think about man – woman relationship. I think those are all major part of the value system.

DANIELLE: It's interesting, because I know people who are of the same culture, who have absolutely different values from mine. And yet I know people who are Canadian who have the same values.

GABRIELLA: I think it is just, there are about several types. You don't leave your parents if you are Egyptian. Some people do, but, generally speaking, they don't. Because the rule is that you stay with your family until you get married. You know what I mean? [Culture shapes]the way how you think about raising kids; or education. I think often in Canada people like to think of just literature and dresses and food, and not really their actual values. Because to be a mosaic, it's easy to allow people to eat what they want, dress what they want. When it comes to values, you have to be careful, because if your values are really racists, you can't keep that here. So, you have to adjust the values. And, therefore people right away think of other stuff not valued.

MARGOT: Do you think that your family contributes to your culture and identity?

DANIELLE: Undoubtedly.

MARGOT: And, friends, traditions?

DANIELLE: I was thinking of traditions, even though I don't consider myself religious, I go back home for the high holidays, because it's a tradition. We have tradition that we sit down, you know 25 people, to a

sit-down dinner. There are certain foods that we eat, and that is tradition. For me it's cultural. But, it's not about religion.

MARGOT: Is it more about if you didn't do that anymore there would be a little piece of you that wasn't around, that was part of who you are?

DANIELLE: Yeah. I don't cry when I hear the Canadian national anthem. No, that's a different issue, totally.

GITA: That always gets me, the Australian anthem. There are a number of songs; probably Hungarian songs, that will make you cry. What will make you cry?

GABRIELLA: A song that's about [how] I left Hungary, and as I left Hungary I turned around and I looked back, and as I looked back, and how I felt very emotional. But, I think it's more about the melody, and less about the text. Or it's the combination. I don't know.

MARGOT: Maybe the associations you have with it?

GABRIELLA: Yeah, and this song is mostly sung by a woman alone. A single voice, there is nothing around it. And that makes it so powerful.

GABRIELLA: I went through a process. At the beginning I was really feeling Hungarian.

DANIELLE: The question that still remains in my mind is whether the age which one immigrates makes a difference. I haven't figured that one out yet. Because, it seems to me that someone who immigrates at a very young age should be able to integrate much more easily. That's the logical conclusion that I come to. So I questioned myself why I struggled so much, and why I still don't feel integrated.

MARGOT: Any ideas about that?

DANIELLE: The only thing that comes to mind is it must be just who I am. And so then the question becomes: Taking away the immigrant experience, would it be any different? So, does immigration really have anything to do with it? I don't know.

MARGOT: And that's the thing that we need to think about. Is this thing called migration is really such a big deal? Or is it just another life experience?

DANIELLE: Well in today's world it's probably much more common also. The world is getting so much smaller, and people are travelling.

GABRIELLA: I think that intellect has a lot to do with it, because, suddenly everything is open and you can read. Somehow I feel that this world travelling and information going around borders, and now I can read all sorts of stuff coming from all sorts of sources. It kind of opened the world up. What I'm thinking right now is maybe this whole "what, who I am", is not definable. My final point is: Can we question this whole thing? Do you need to be x or y? Or are you always somewhere in between, between countries, between cultures? Depending how old you are or what's going on around you. And maybe there are no two Canadians or no two Egyptians ever, or no two Jewish ever. So maybe we are trying to create categories, and put people into places. And maybe it's nonexistent. We just force it on people. We change, but sometimes we are more Jewish than anybody else. You never know. Or more Egyptian, or more South-African.

MARGOT: Do you think there would have been something that would have made it easier for you? Could you have pre-done something that would have made it easier for you, or different?

DANIELLE: In my case, I think if my parents had had an easier time living with themselves, certainly it would have made the experience different. But they had a very difficult time, and therefore that made it difficult for me, especially at such a young age. Circumstances were such, that when we went from Egypt to Paris, to Canada, and whatever time we spend in Paris, circumstances were such that I was completely alone.

MARGOT: Alone, yet part of the family.
DANIELLE: Totally, completely. Sent to nursery school by myself in a foreign country without anything familiar, no family; no support whatsoever. That probably had an effect more than anything else.
GABRIELLA: I totally agree with the support. I think when we came I just had my sister's friend for three months. That's it. So I think if there would have been a family that I am dropped into, somebody who likes me just as much as my family likes and knows the culture, and understands the rules, and can teach me about the little things that I had to know, that would have made support, and belonging to a group of people that as soon as I come, they would welcome me as a family, not just an official person who was assigned to do something. That would have made a big difference. That's a huge thing.
DANIELLE: I come back to the issue of working with people who have been relocated. That's part of what we do. They go through all the things that they go through in life; at least I'm somebody that the person can talk to on a regular basis about whatever.
MARGOT: You are a constant. And also one who has gone through the process and understands them.
DANIELLE: That's right. I think that's very important.
GABRIELLA: She is knowledgeable. She is in the culture. She knows back and forward. She can advise. She is regularly available. I think it's awesome. So I think something similar, but more like friendly and warm. You know, more like a family. Not less than an officer.
MARGOT: Almost like a mentoring system?
GABRIELLA: Yeah.
DANIELLE: That's interesting. We must write it into the immigration laws that there should be a mentoring system.
GABRIELLA: But think about it. Like, when you were young and if there would have been another family with another child, you right away have somebody to play with, even though you might not speak their language. I think that makes a huge difference.
DANIELLE: The citizens of the world. My favourite advertisement is the Oreo commercial. There is a young boy who just moved into a new neighbourhood. Or he sees a young Chinese boy who just moved into the neighbourhood. So he offers him an Oreo cookie and they're having a conversation, one in English, the other in Chinese. And the translation comes up in words so that you can see it. And they actually both say exactly the same thing. Five, six years old, something like that, sharing this Oreo cookie. It doesn't matter where you come from; you eat it the same way. That's shared experience. They have this in common, even though they are from different cultures.
MARGOT: Is that very important; the idea of 'in common'?
DANIELLE: Yes, that is why I brought it up. The commercial for me just encompasses that whole thing. These two children have this in common even though they are from completely different cultures and different worlds. They have this shared experience. I think bottom line when you come to Canada you still flock to your own community. There's little Italy, little China, and there's little Portugal, and little Lebanon.
GABRIELLA: Right now I am thinking you maybe did a disfavour or a favour to yourself. Time will tell, because you were a rare rooted citizen of one country, and you made yourself to become an immigrant. Somebody who doesn't belong anywhere, and now you are going back, and you get all of this resistance of what do you know about us. You left, and you are a traitor, and it will take a lot of time to get through this and adjust and be accepted again. So you either did a disfavour for yourself because you went through an experience of ten years or so not belonging anywhere, not feeling happy. Or maybe you did a good service for yourself because you experienced something that made you become more tolerant than a much richer person. So time will tell. It's just like me coming from Hungary. Everybody

is white, everybody is Hungarian, and we are thinking the same. I'm comfortable coming here and suddenly going through stuff becomes … things more complex and richer because I have seen more.
MARGOT: Would the four of us have been the same people we are today if we had not gone through this experience?
GABRIELLA: No.
DANIELLE: No.
MARGOT: And looking back is this a choice that we would make again?
DANIELLE: I didn't make the choice.
MARGOT: But you knowing what you know…
DANIELLE: Do I think I would have made the choice? Yes I would have.
GABRIELLA: I think when I made the choice I had no choice what I was doing. We talked a lot about guts, but I think in my case it was a big portion of naivety. I had no clue what I was doing.
DANIELLE: I think that's probably natural.
MARGOT: You were on an adventure.
GABRIELLA: Yeah, but I think the naivety was needed. Maybe if I had the knowledge that I have today, I'm not sure I would have the guts. At the time I had no clue, and just doing it, and we didn't even know what we were doing. I would do it again, but what's interesting is whenever somebody wants to visit me, I warn the person. I say, you come here once, you will see this, you will fall in love, and you might never be happy, because you come here, and it's "oh it's so nice," and then you go back, and you start to do when I'm over there I want to be here. I have only one sister, and I never encouraged her to come and stay. I have said it's such a big thing. I have seen so many families destroyed by it, and so many relationships and so many people struggle. It's a huge thing.
DANIELLE: The one thing that comes to mind here is I remember my mother saying how miserable she was to be coming to Canada when the rest of her family was in Europe. Twenty years later she went, and we would go to visit her family in Europe and she would say "I don't know how they manage to cope with the Catholic calendar."
MARGOT: That's about the meaning-making; how it is that we make sense of whatever it is that we do and what happens to us. I suppose in the end that's what it's about. How do we make meaning of what it is that happens to us?
DANIELLE: I wonder if someone who hasn't gone through this kind of experience asks themselves the same kinds of questions. Theoretically we are all immigrants, but you know, how many generations. My mother was originally from Africa; her parents came from Africa, but not from my father's side. My father was first generation.
GABRIELLA: I didn't like to ask these questions in the beginning. Maybe now I will think about them …
MARGOT: Thank you very much for talking to me. If there is anything you would like to add to this conversation, will you please email me? If you have any other thoughts or questions that come to you that were loosened by our speaking together.

STORY GUIDE
Guiding Questions About Your Experience of Migration
(Added Version)

B. PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Your Name:	**2. Date:**	**3. Would you like to use a pseudonym and what should your pseudonym be?**
Gabriella	02 May 2012	

4. Your Age:	**5. Your gender:**	**6. Where were you born?**
	Female	Hungary

7. Which countries have you lived in since originally leaving your country of birth? How long did you live in each country?

C. MIGRATION
(*A migrant is seen as someone who stays outside of their usual country of residence for at least one year.***)**

M1. How would you describe your overall experience of migration? Could you please tell me a story that would an illustration of your experience?

Gabriella: I actually had an experience at the American border. They asked for passport and they said "citizenship?", and I said Canadian. And the American officer said "A born Canadian or just another kind?" And I said "The other kind". He asked that, and he said pull over. He just checked, but that's that.

M2. What <u>pulled</u> you towards migrating (made you consider migration as an option)?

Gabriella: I think in my story what also helped me to become Canadian, is that my father is a self-made man, who is very successful in a small town where he lives.

M3. What <u>pushed</u> you (eventually made you go) to migrate?

Gabriella: I think in my story what also helped me to become Canadian, is that my father is a self-made man, who is very successful in a small town where he lives. I felt that no matter what I have done in that small town, I never got recognition for my successes, because she is so and so's daughter, of course she has this, or of course she has that, or of course she would be more whatever. So I think in my story I had to move far away. My father's hand could not reach as far, and I could become my own…. But the Hungarian culture is very negative. People are always negative in Hungary. And sometimes I think it has to do with the communism. Because doing communism you had to downplay everything. Whoever had more money or more power, that person had to do something under the table, or something sneaky. So there for people always downplayed things.

M4. Why did you decide on the country you eventually migrated to? Was this country what you expected? How so?

Gabriella: We were behind the iron curtain and wanted to see the other side. We tried to find out how could we visit a western country (tried Austria, Sweden) and eventually find the way to go to Canada. Travelling to west was only allowed once every three years. You had to have special reasons for wanting to go west and permission to travel west was not always granted. As soon as you were refused, your next application was even more cross examined...

I had no expectation of Canada. I knew very little about the country. It took me quite a bit time to find out what Canada is like because I did not speak English when we arrived. During the first year I learned only a tiny bit about the country because my lack of English.

M5. What were your hopes and dreams and desires for your migratory experience? Do you think you contributed to the country you migrated to and is your contribution in line with your hopes and dreams and desires about migrating?

Gabriella: When we left Hungary we did not know that we were immigrating. So it was not decided consciously and executed after the decision. We came as visitors and ended up staying here. I actually wanted to be independent, my own woman, and I think I achieved this here in Canada. I still received support from my family, but to a much lesser degree than I had in Hungary.

M6. What was going on in your life when you left your country of origin? What were some of the things you preferred for your life and what were some of the things you would have preferred to *not* have been going on in your life before you left?

Gabriella: But there is a distinctive Canadian culture that I believe in. It's that everybody is from everywhere. People have totally different views. Yet they function together somehow fairly well. Which is amazing. As I said before, I wanted to be my own woman, which was hard for me when I was close to my family. Also my life was too good in Hungary. I needed hardship and challenge. I think I got that in Canada.

I could have lead a much easier life in Hungary because I was more stable financially there than here. Also in Hungary I had a big network, family and friends, lots of good connections. In Canada I do not have the fraction of it, even after being here for 22 years.

On the other hand, I did not like the Hungarian mentality (always negative, pessimistic and complaining) so I am glad that I could distance myself from that.

M7. Would you go through the migratory process again? Why/why not? Who encouraged you to go?

Gabriella: I would immigrate again but I would need to have a really good reason for it. I actually wanted to establish myself in Canada within 10 years, but it took me more than that, around 15 years. Immigration is not a short process.

It is funny, but my father was the person who wanted me to immigrate... for a different reason... but yes, he suggested me to not to come back to Hungary.

M8. What did you find difficult and/or easy about the process of migration? What would you do differently if you were to redo the process again?

Gabriella: So I didn't find it hard even though I started working for somebody and being her maid for two years, and cleaning her house for two years with an engineering degree in my pocket, because I felt this is just like adventure, this is so cool, this is so different. Later on I had this feeling that we are high and far away. The difficult part was the length of establishing myself in the new country. I went back to university, started from scratch, then ended up in graduate school. Had a baby after this and entered the workforce almost at the age of 44. Most people by this age are starting to think about retirement...

I found hard that I had no friends and could not read (because I did not speak English). I came with my husband, so it was just a two of us for a long time. I am an avid reader and could not read for years so my favourite hobby went for a while.

Of course I missed my family, holidays were really painful at the beginning but generally speaking I still felt fine.

M9. What do you think the pros and cons of migration are in general? Would you encourage others to migrate?
Gabriella: I had the drive to accomplish something on my own, because I never got the recognition. No matter what I did, and how I did it, I never got the recognition. So, I had this drive, and I think that helped me. I would never encourage anybody to immigrate. Immigration is a really big decision. I would rather state pros and cons and let the other person to decide. Pros: The country is your choice. You can research and choose a country based on your liking. A chosen country has the possibility of a better fit than a country that just happens to you. Immigration is a real eye-opening experience. Suddenly what you always believed in is questioned, and what you questioned is accepted by people around you. It makes you to re-evaluate things that you took for granted and helps you be more critical. Con: You "lose" your family and you "lose" your friend. That is the biggest con. You need to start from scratch. You have to learn the culture, the customs, the language, and the rules. You likely need to start school from scratch. You need to find friends. When you come here you have nothing (no knowledge of this new culture, no network, no friends, sometimes even your holidays go as well) and you have to acquire all of this. Immigration takes time.
M10. What do you think the governments of your receiving country should/could do to make it easier for you to be there?
Gabriella: A lot. Number one: recognize our degrees, experiences and knowledge. If someone was for example a doctor in another country, let that person to be a doctor in Canada, after passing some reasonable exams. I see too many brain surgeons pumping gas, and too many psychologists babysitting even after spending many years in the new country. What a waste! We have excellent career services for people who get laid off. Why could not we have similar services for new immigrants? Or courses, where you are explained how to find a job, how to look for an apartment, how to apply for school, how to find friends, how to get a family doctor, or open a bank account. Also they could talk about cultural shock, etc.
B. CULTURE **(***e.g., the ways that people, living in different part of the world, classify and represent their experiences.***)**
C1. When you think about growing up, can you think of one specific cultural tradition (e.g., birthdays) passed on to you by your family? What was the cultural flavour of the house you grew up in? What are some of the earliest memories of these cultural influences you can recall? Can you remember any rituals, celebrations or traditions of your family? What cultural values did your family teach you? Can you tell a story that would represent an illustration of the cultural ethos of your family?
C2. What cultural influences are still now important to you? How much of a factor in your life has your cultural background been?
Gabriella: The fact that I lived in 2 cultures, (27 years in Hungary and 22 years in Canada) makes me question everything. I do not buy into anything, and I make up my mind about most things on my own. I do not follow the crowd.
C3. Can you think of one specific cultural tradition or influence passed on to you by society in your country of origin?
C4. How did you experience the new culture you moved into? Difficult? Easy? What made it so?
Gabriella: Different. The new culture is individualistic, my old one was collectivist. This is a big

difference!
In some things I am individualistic, but in others I am collectivist.
The new culture felt colder perhaps for the above reason. And because in Canada people are opportunistic, and adapt really fast. They move frequently, they go to places where jobs are. They do not have roots. They do not have friends whom they grew up with (since they move all the time) and because of that they develop more distant relationships. They do not let other people close.

C5. How much of the culture you moved into did you absorb, do you think? Are you OK with what you absorbed? What did you absorb that you would rather now discard? Would you prefer to move away from your adopted culture back to your culture of origin? Why/Why not? What do you still find strange about your new culture? Could you tell a story or tell about an incident that would describe how you interacted with the other culture you now found yourself immersed into?

Gabriella: I think I absorbed a lot. At least I can understand some things that I could not understand 25 years ago.
For example: Why would someone charge their kid rent? This was a horrible idea for me 25 years ago. Now I get it. Would I charge my son rent ever? Hmmm. I am not sure. To make a point, maybe.
I still find it strange how people force their children to be independent. They make them sleep alone; they let them cry themselves to sleep, they kick them out when they are 18.
I could never do this.
To move back to Hungary? I do not want to, but I could if I would need to. I feel at home in Canada, but I did not pick up every single Canadian value, and I did not lose every single Hungarian value. I have the mixture in me.
When I came to Canada, I found strange how far people stood from each other. Their personal space was huge. It was really weird. They did not touch each other, ever.
I touch, but now I stand just as far as any Canadian. In Hungary from time to time I feel uneasy when strangers come very close.

C6. What do you think the idea of culture includes? How would you describe it? If you had to write a definition about the concept of culture, what would that definition include?

Gabriella: History, literature, art, sport... but for me the culture is a lot about values.

C7. Do you experience a sense of belonging/community in the country you migrated to? Does this community which you have now become part of include local people or did you gravitate more towards your 'own' people who lives in your new country?

Gabriella: I feel Canadian…. I can say that in certain situations, especially when I talk and I can't express myself well. I'm just like, I can't talk, this is so hard, and why can't I just like anybody else to feel part of the conversation. But, I don't always feel outsider. I feel at home. Maybe I'm the lucky one. I feel good, and I feel at home. And I don't regret it. And I don't want to go back. I miss my family, but I want them to come here more than I want to go back.
When we came to Canada and I knew enough English I avoided Hungarians. I thought I did not come here to be with them. Later I spent 8 years at universities in Canada where I have not had a Hungarian classmate. I mixed with whoever attended my classes. I was more immersed into the Canadian university life, and mixed with people who attended my classes.
Lately I mix more with Hungarians because we want our son to learn the language and the culture. He used to go to Hungarian school, performed at the Hungarian Hall with his schoolmates, and is currently member of the Hungarian Boy Scouts. We belong to the Hungarian community more now than ever before because we want our son to learn the language and understand the culture.

C. IDENTITY **(***e.g., how you would describe yourself.***)**
I1. What in your adopted country shaped you the most in describing yourself as you would at the moment? Why do you think this shaped you in the way it has? What would you describe as the main things you learned about yourself whilst living in this culture different to your own?
Gabriella: I cannot separate what changed in me because of living in Canada, and what changed because I aged.
I2. What are some of the best memories about the culture you migrated to and do you hold some less preferable memories about this culture? Would you mind telling about a less preferable memory?
Gabriella: It was nice when I got the Dean's Medal for the highest grade average for 2 years at the Social Science Department at my university. It was sad when I was laid off for first time in my life in Canada. When I left Hungary the country was communist. In communism we had the constitutional right to work. Everybody had a job and people were never laid off. The concept of losing a job was foreign to me.
I3. What did you accomplish in the country you moved to that you think you would not have accomplished in your country of origin?
Gabriella: I would have never had a Master degree in Human Computer Interaction and I would have never worked as a usability specialist.
I4. Do you think there is something that you would like the Authorities (e.g., United Nations, International Office of Migration, Governments) world-wide to know that might help migrants all over the world?
Gabriella: The most important is to let people know how they can get food and shelter (or make money to get these) and how they can protect themselves from diseases and illnesses and other physical dangers while they are on the go. Helping people to fulfil these basic needs should be the Authorities' number one priority. They should focus on children and help them to survive the migration as best as possible.
I5. When you left your country of origin, how would you have described yourself at that stage? How would one of the significant people in your life have described you at that time?
I6. How would you describe yourself now that you have migrated? How would one of the significant persons in your life now describe you?
I7. Would you like to change anything about those descriptions you mentioned above? Who/what contributed the most to the change in the way you described yourself before you migrated and to your description of yourself now?
I8. Are there times when you would describe yourself differently to the way you described yourself above? When would those times be and what would contribute to the descriptions about yourself that would be relevant at that stage?
I9. Do you think different descriptions of yourself are true for you about yourself at different times in your life/day and when different circumstances prevail?
Gabriella: Sure but only to a certain degree. I think my core is the same and it only changes slightly, if at all.

I10. How would you describe your personal identity or sense of self after your stay in your new country? Would this description be different to how you would have described yourself before you migrated?
Gabriella: I cannot separate the change that immigration brought from the change aging brought. I do not think that I am a different person because I immigrated. I think my core is the same.
E. ... and finally ...
F1. Did we leave anything out that you would still like to have discussed during this 'conversation'? Please tell any other stories which you think are important and representative of the process of migration between countries.
F2. Can you think of any other questions that should have been included in this 'conversation'?

INTERVIEW WITH COENIE
(Translated from Afrikaans)

Coenie has just turned 27. He is a young man who was born and raised in South Africa. He had lived in Taiwan, in the suburb of Tianzhong, since he left South Africa (for about two years) and before his return after his accident at the end of 2010. Initially he had lived with friends, and was a teacher in Beidoi. Coenie is somebody who likes his privacy and so he didn't want to continue to live with his friends as they were a young married couple. He got his own place to live in Beidoi, a few hundred meters from the school. It was a three-bed roomed flat, with two bathrooms - wonderful and perfect. This was in November, soon after he arrived in Taiwan. He had lived with his friends, G&Y until the end of August; for about two to three months. It was a bit too long to live with somebody, but then he luckily got a place of his own.

At the end of December, the principal with the nickname, Lucifer (he was like the devil and had spies in one's classrooms), told him, after he had worked at his school for about three or four months, that he didn't think they got along so well, because Coenie got a bit frustrated with the principal. So, unfortunately, he had to leave and find another job. This was by mutual agreement between Coenie and Lucifer. Finding another job wasn't so easy. But, luckily, at the other school in Tianzhong - about seven to eight, maybe twelve kilometres from Beidoi - some people wanted to move to Australia. The school then needed another teacher. Coenie accepted the position. It was in the same vicinity where G&Y also worked. G&Y worked at Success International Kindergarten, and Coenie got the job at Wellspeak English School.

Every day for about two to three months, Coenie went from Tianzhong to Beidoi by scooter. His life was easier when he moved into his flat. He could sleep late, and within two minutes he would be at school. But this arrangement only lasted for two months. When he left Lucifer, he had to drive all the way from Beidoi to Tianzhong. That was about ten kilometres. It was a very nice route. Within ten minutes he was at school. For a year and a few months - from August 2009 till end November 2010 - Coenie lived in Taiwan. In July 2010 he had his near-fatal road accident on his scooter. He came back to South Africa after his accident.

MARGOT: The first questions I'm going to ask you are about migration. Migration refers to living in a country different to your country of origin/birth for one year or more. How would you describe your experience of migration?

COENIE: It was very nice. Good.

MARGOT: What had drawn you there? What had drawn you to migrate to Taiwan?

COENIE: I already know what pushed me. The fact that by then I haven't been trying very hard, that I hadn't got a nice job in South Africa. I completed my studies, an Honours degree in Tourism. I ended up working in an archive where I did research work. I am a person who likes working with people, so to work with books and dust made me mad and didn't satisfy me at all. They paid me, so I at least had money for food and for going out, but I got no satisfaction at all. It also was an interesting experience taking the bus into the city and to walk in the city, amongst all the people. That was nice. I saw other people that I never would have seen otherwise. What pushed me to Taiwan was that I didn't have a nice job, and that I didn't get job satisfaction. And I was still living with my parents. I wanted to get out. I wanted to have some freedom.

MARGOT: While you were studying, did you live with your parents as well?

COENIE: Yes, I just wanted to get out a bit and experience life.

MARGOT: And the move; do you think that maybe you moved because G&Y had moved to Taiwan? I can remember that at that stage you had told me that G was trying to convince you to go to Taiwan.
COENIE: He convinced me to move, but he had also told me that it certainly wasn't easy. There are people who leave Taiwan on the first day. There are people that get depressed. There are people that literally go crazy there. He convinced me to move by telling me that it is a cute place to live; that the people there are cute. Furthermore, he had said that it is a very warm place - it feels like hell. So, the heat wasn't a big attraction. The children are cute, he said, but the working hours are very long, so you will get very tired. So, really, there were not many things that attracted me to the country.
MARGOT: So it was more of a push than a move?
COENIE: Yes.
MARGOT: If you had had another option, do you think you would have taken the other option rather than going there?
COENIE: No, I like adventure. I thought about it a bit, like, if I would have gone to Europe, or if I had had a chance to go to London or to America, it would have been nice, but it feels to me that there is not much adventure in doing that. It's just like, there (the 'easy' countries) is money, and there are jobs. There you just get on. Everything just easily works out.
MARGOT: Those are cultures that you are more used to; you can speak the language along with knowing all the basic things which represents western culture.
COENIE: Correct, so I felt the need for a challenge. The food must smell and taste different. The people have to be different. The religion must be totally different. So I felt like experiencing new things.
MARGOT: How did you choose to go to the country where you eventually went to?
COENIE: It was the first offer I got to go to another country. I still remember the day when G phoned and asked me why you don't come there. I'm like, why would I? Maybe I want to. Then he told me to send my CV to this school, and then they will have an interview with me over the phone. And then they did it, and I passed. "When can you come?" they asked me. "When must I come?" "Can you be here next week?" "It is a bit short notice" I said, "maybe in three weeks' time." If I would have done some research now, I would have said it is a beautiful country and very different culture.
MARGOT: But at that stage it was what was available?
COENIE: Exactly yes.
MARGOT: When you arrived in Taiwan, was it what you expected it to be? Was the country and its culture what you expected it to be or was it something quite different?
COENIE: It was a major culture shock, because I told myself in the beginning: I'm not going to think now how it is maybe going to be. I also had not done much research about the country. My parents and friends did a lot more research than I had done. I just thought, ah man, the more shocks I get, the bigger the shock, the better. So, I didn't really know about the typhoon when I arrived there. Up until my friends asked me, "How is it going there?" "No, there is a very big typhoon here." It was after my plane landed in Taipei, and when we got into the car, , then I saw, "Wow, here is a typhoon behind us!" With that the rain started coming. So, the next day, luckily, my friends were off work, because the streets were overflowing. So they couldn't go to school. So I could spend a bit more time with them before they had to start with their school stuff again. I didn't expect much, but the typhoon was a shock for sure . I didn't expect it. I got a shock too, because in the first few days the food wasn't tasty. Everything - rooms, bathrooms, even people - shocked me. Everything was just different. And it smelled (stank). I actually missed it at the end, because then I couldn't smell anything anymore (a result of the accident).

MARGOT: Is the smelling about the saying 'horses for courses'? Sometimes you are happy about something, but at other times you are not happy about it.
COENIE: Yes, I surely suffered in the beginning. Because getting used to something isn't easy.
MARGOT: What was going on in your life when you left? What was happening for you that made it easier to cope with leaving?
COENIE: I am not a person for routine work every day, so it was a time when I woke up every day and did the same thing, went to work and did the same thing, then went home and did the same thing. And I was tired of the fact that although I have such good parents, and a good childhood home, I just had to be checked up on the whole time. I was a young man, so I wanted some of my own freedom. Actually, I didn't have any freedom. I did not even have satisfaction from my work. And it was the same thing over and over, and it was the same friends over and over every day. I just felt the need for something new.
MARGOT: Will you do it again?
COENIE: Yes, but maybe to another country. I have now seen Taiwan. I will only go there for a vacation, and to go and visit the nurses and other teachers.
MARGOT: Will you go to another country to work if you have the option?
COENIE: Yes, if there would be the same kind of push actions, I would probably do the same thing. If I am still here in a year's time and I still don't have a nice job, or I am still here in this same boat, then I will spread my wings again, and go to another overseas country.
MARGOT: An Eastern country rather than a Western country?
COENIE: Maybe a Western country can also become an option, but I don't know. But I like the East. And next time I want to go to Taiwan I plan to save a lot , because I want to visit Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, and all of those other places I wanted to visit when I was first in Taiwan. And I didn't, because of this 'small' accident. I was well on my way to organizing my first trip, but it didn't happen, because of the accident.
MARGOT: So you will migrate again? Even if some things were bad, you will do it again?
COENIE: Yes. I won't go to work for just R2 an hour. K, my friend, went to India, about three or four days ago. He is going to be a teacher there for R5000 per month. I said to him "It's not much." He said if you work it back to South African Rands, the Rupees that he earns is about equivalent to RSA20 000. So he is lucky. So maybe I would like to do something like that.
MARGOT: In terms of the accident, where do you find yourself currently? Is going to India an option at this time, or are there some other medical things you still have to do?
COENIE: I would be on my way if my dentist hadn't told to me that "It will be better if you stay here for two years." That is how long I have to wear my dental wires. Because if other doctors in other countries work on it, they will probably mess it up.
MARGOT: Would that be because the other doctors wouldn't know what his plan is?
COENIE: Exactly. They don't know exactly what is going on. The big reason is that my jaw moved 4mm because of the accident. So, I had a different, funny kind of bite. So I couldn't tear steak as I usually did.
MARGOT: Did your jaw go sideways, to the front, to the back, what happened?
COENIE: Sideways, semi forward, backwards. It was just crooked. They could have left it that way, but then I would have had a crooked smile for a long time and I would have to eat steak this way the whole time, from the side (showing me a tearing motion from the right, back side of his mouth). Then they said surgery would probably be the best. But when they saw how much metal I had in my face, they realized, wow, maybe something could go wrong. I don't want to sit with a hanging lip, or a hanging nose, or a hanging cheek for the rest of my life. Then he said, rather take the dental wires. That is the safest, easiest option.

MARGOT: Was there something that was specifically difficult for you about going to Taiwan? If you think about the whole process of migration, is there something that was specifically difficult for you like getting a visa, or whatever it is that you can think of?
COENIE: No, there isn't. There are only the emotional things of a new experience. That is all. But everything else was just so easy, it just fell into place.
MARGOT: If G&Y weren't there already, do you think that it would have been so easy for you? Say, for instance, you went on your own?
COENIE: Naturally it wouldn't have been so easy, because it was a bad landing, for sure. But, if I only say one thing, if I do something like this again, I would actually prefer not to have such a soft landing.
MARGOT: Why?
COENIE: It is cute and everything and it is nice. Sure, if it is your first time overseas and the first time you are going to work in another country, then you need friends. But it can get uncomfortable even with your best friends, especially if you live with them and all;. We are certainly not on the same page as we were before the accident - as before we were all in Taiwan together. So, it isn't easy, and it is just, if you are only so many white people from your culture in another country, and you see each other every day, it won't have a pleasant effect on your relationship. So, I would prefer if I go again, then I will rather not do it like that. I will go on my own, and that is it. But, if they weren't there, I would certainly not have gone as easily, I suppose.
MARGOT: I think now about when we went, what a massive issue it was, for example, to get your pay at the end of the month, and to get a simple thing like a cell phone contract. Were those the kind of things that you also experienced?
COENIE: Not at all, no. To open a bank account was the biggest problem. So every month I received cash that I had to put somewhere in my bag or so. I received cash, but that was at the one school that was still using a cash system. That was the way they pay. So every month I received cash, for sure. Basic things were easy to get hold of, if you ask the right people. The Chinese teachers were very helpful with that. At the other school, I just gave all my stuff to this one guy, the guy from the bank, and it was all handled. The next day they came back, I just had to sign a few papers. Quick, quick, and it was all done. But, things like that and other things too, are much more difficult if you don't have a degree. I felt sorry for my friends who didn't have degrees. I found it very easy. All those things were quick, quick and they were honest. If they said you will get paid every second week of every month, they put it in your hands, in an envelope.
MARGOT: Would you say that the value of honesty that they use in their businesses, is different than what you are used to in your country of origin?
COENIE: I don't have much work experience here in South Africa, but certainly, just their (Taiwanese) way of not wanting to stab people in the back. South Africans, I realized, are completely into that kind of business. They like stabbing people in the back, talking behind other's backs. I realized in that country they are not like that. I don't know if it is because of their religion. I don't know if it is because of this or that. It is just the way they were raised, I think.
MARGOT: Do you think there is something that the government of the country you went to could have done to make the whole process easier for you and for other people that go there?
COENIE: I can only think of one thing, and that is how embarrassed my friends were who didn't have a degree. Actually, that is why many people don't want to go, because those people get discriminated against. I don't know why. I don't know if they think that people who don't have a degree are like dogs. When I arrived in the country, I didn't have to undergo the taking of a urine sample. They also had to poo in a little tub. So, that is quite an embarrassment to those kinds of people –people without degrees. You get that kind of attitude from most of those people. From the schools, from the principal, or from

those people, if you don't have a degree, then you don't get treated like the other people. I think it may be better if the government can take away those types of things, the discrimination thing. Because, if you show your police report that you are not a criminal, and that you have got experience working with children, and you have a reference letter, then I think it is good enough. I have a degree in tourism. Am I then better than a person who has experience working with children, but doesn't have a degree? No. I think you need a degree to teach there. Maybe that is still the same. But for instance, somebody who has a wife with a degree can go with her, on her visa. I don't know if they can teach, but there are many ways to get into that country under the radar. Many of those schools are working with the mafia, and the police. They are all in it together, so they don't get into trouble. So, actually I don't know what more the government can do, because I know that they are just the same as our government. All I know is, if you don't know somebody in Taiwan, or if you don't go through an agency, then you will never actually know how the school really is. So, you will have to make some phone calls, or ask around, or have some contacts in a country to know exactly how it is. I don't know what the government can do about it, but you have to do your own homework.

MARGOT: Coenie, now we move on to talking about culture and your understanding of culture. Is that OK? Do you still have other stories you would like to tell specifically about the process of migration?

COENIE: It's OK. I can't think of anything right now.

MARGOT: Can you think of a cultural tradition that has stayed the same in your family for many generations, and that are still a part of your life?

COENIE: No, luckily we are not that traditional. But, there was a time where we had to sit around the table to eat, and hold hands, and pray, and then eat. But luckily we have outgrown that. Big family gatherings, for example. My one uncle really goes out of his way with this when it is his birthday, then the whole family gets together and we enjoy the gathering. My parents try each year to go away with the family. Even if it is to a farm or the national parks. So that is the only cultural, traditional thing I can think of - the family being together - but not as regular as always, but we still try to do it like that. The same goes for Christmas. Now you try to do it a bit different, because you can't gather with the in-laws and with your own family all at the same time. So one year is with the in-laws, and the next with your own family. With birthdays the present [tradition] still goes on.

MARGOT: So there are certain definite rituals to birthdays?

COENIE: Yes. The same people usually write the same kinds of letters to the same people. The other lazy people only give presents.

MARGOT: Can you think of specific cultural things that you absorbed from society?

COENIE: I am rebellious against everything that is traditional, but one of the things that irritates me is what society brings. Our Afrikaner people are very traditional about calling older people uncle and auntie, that kind of thing. And, luckily I don't go to the kind of churches anymore, where one has to stand up and sit down, and wear hats; those kind of things. Luckily I don't have many friends anymore who go to those kinds of churches. The biggest thing is respect For example, to stand up when a lady walks into the room, and to take your cap off when greeting somebody, uncle, auntie, this and that. And, I have been rebellious against those things for the last few years, but with some people you just have to do it, otherwise you are very disrespectful. I will say it to somebody who expects it from you. For example professors and ministers, who expect it from you, "My name is Prof", and "I am minister", and if somebody says to me "I am uncle." If I know he has an inferiority complex, then you have to do it that way.

MARGOT: What would you say were the cultural "flavour" of the home where you were raised? Mine, for instance, was Afrikaans, Christian. I don't know how you would describe yours.
COENIE: Also Afrikaans. And, I would say, respect towards other people. Luckily my parents didn't cling to this traditional man-made Christian thing, even though we are Christians. It is not like putting on your suit every Sunday, and your hat, and then we go to church. So, I will say Afrikaans, respectful and with good manners. That is how we were raised.
MARGOT: What are the first memories of cultural influences that you can remember? Would you say it is like being respectful and saying auntie and uncle, or thank you and please?
COENIE: That is exactly what I just wanted to mention - how to be respectful towards other people, mainly people older than you; by, for example, saying uncle and auntie, and thank you. You have to have good manners. That is the only memories that I have.
MARGOT: Can you remember any celebrations and traditions from your culture and childhood that still exists?
COENIE: Many of them went on for a long time, but it isn't the same anymore because of the people that went away from South Africa, or people that are adults now with their own children. I'll say that we are really trying to maintain our traditions at Christmas, even if it is only once every two years, it is an important time to get together. Christmas day is the biggest day; and sometimes birthdays. If everybody can be together, it would be nice, especially if it is dad's or mom's birthday, or granny's birthday.
MARGOT: What cultural values do you think your family taught you?
COENIE: Respect towards other people. It is not just the uncle-, auntie-thing, but to respect other people, and to know your place.
MARGOT: I just want to get clarity. Does being respectful mean being subservient? Or is it something else?
COENIE: Yes, in a way it is that also. Correct. Recently I am not. I don't have that type of thing in my head anymore, but yes. Respect towards other people. That is the main thing. Luckily my parents got a wakeup call, and they aren't these "religious" people now. It is still this "Let's read the Bible" thing. They still do it, but they don't force it on us anymore.
MARGOT: I just want to make sure. Do they still do that "Let's read The Bible" thing?
No, it is not that serious anymore. Maybe they just do it together. We all are away from home a lot, so we can't do it that way anymore, but maybe they still do it together. There was this phase where everything at home was about religion. It was like that at one time, yes. At first it was along with other people. And then we went on our own. And then we grew up, and weren't home as much. It just faded away.
MARGOT: Which of these cultural influences, whether it is from society or from home, are still important to you at this stage?
COENIE: Just to have respect towards other people. Without that, you don't get respect. You mustn't always just see the bad things about people. I don't do that.
MARGOT: How much of an influence did these cultural influences from society and home, have on you in your life as a whole?
COENIE: It is big. When you were small, you didn't know of anything better. So you just went on with it like a robot, because it had to be like that. So it had a big effect, and made a big difference without me even realizing it. And, I realized it even better when I went to Taiwan, to another place, and realized that you don't have to live your life that way. I mean, you don't have to have that traditional lifestyle. There are other ways, too. So maybe it is not always right of me, but that is also one of the reasons that I am

rebellious against those types of things. But I realize that for some people it is important, so I just have to be the least, and just go on with it.

MARGOT: How did you experience moving into the new culture? If you could hold a mirror up and reflect your own culture into that mirror, how would it compare?

COENIE: Totally different. Except for [the fact that] they also have the whole respect thing for other people. But everything from believing and religious beliefs is the same thing. Food, the way they live, the way they drive, the way they talk to other people, just everything being different, that was nice. And, of course there were many things that irritated me.

MARGOT: Like what?

COENIE: Sometimes you think your own race is a bunch of common people. How many of them are like that? But, every race has its "rejects," and ways that irritate you.

MARGOT: Will that be more of not being used to it, or more of it being irritating?

COENIE: Both, it depends on what type of things they are. You realize it is the way they talk. Sometimes they shout at you. Or, it is the way they chew chewing gum. They chew with their mouths open. You get used to it, and make peace with it. Another interesting thing is that they don't get mad at each other on the roads. For example, I will stop in front of somebody, by accident maybe, and he'll just brake. Even if he swings out, he won't do anything. He'll just look at you. If somebody stops in front of me now, and I lift my middle finger, even then he won't do anything. He will just look at you. That is quite irritating.

MARGOT: How much of the Taiwanese culture do you think you absorbed?

COENIE: The way that I started treating other people at that time, and the way I communicated with other people - that was in a way different. Some of the things slipped my mind, because of my short-term memory loss. I just remember something about, when I arrived back in South Africa, I had to learn things again like, the way I am talking to you now. Oh, gosh, it makes you angry, and oh I'm sorry. I mustn't do this, and I mustn't do that. So I got angry for the way they live. I have an Indonesian girlfriend who acted a lot like a Taiwanese person. The longer you are in another country, I think, that is if you are single, the more their lifestyle and way of living gets to be part of you, and I accepted it. Even the girls become attractive to you. Two of my friends there married Taiwanese ladies. It definitely had an effect on my relationships with other people. Even the food. I was less fussy when I came back to South Africa. There I ate a lot of new things. There I also ate a lot of unpleasant things. So, I am not fussy about food.

MARGOT: So you are fine with the things previously unknown to you which you absorbed in Taiwan?

COENIE: Yes, completely. Some people will have a fit if they go into one of their temples. I took my camera, and with big festivals I took photos inside the temples, and watched what they were doing. That was the best of all.

MARGOT: If you think back now, what do you still find strange about the Taiwanese culture?

COENIE: I know we, the Afrikaner, work hard, but just the fact that they are almost like robots, the Taiwanese people. They easily work two to three times harder than us South Africans. And it is as if they don't fight against it, or are not even rebellious about it. It is just the way they are raised and they just get on with it. When I see the temples, I sometimes I think it looks as if our religions can be similar. Then to me it just looks a bid "empty." Another funny thing is why on earth you buy money to burn money to the gods, and those types of things. That is also strange to me. Another question is why do you put beer out, and food for the gods, if they don't come and get it, or eat or drink it? I was even at a temple where a girl, even though she was still dressed, danced like a stripper in the temple. Two old men were just sitting there (they were certainly not there for the gods), each had a beer in the hand and

watched the girl. The girl danced for the gods. So their type of religion and their way of not stopping work is funny to me, weird. I think I'm just not used to it.

MARGOT: Will you encourage other people to migrate?

COENIE: Yes, I already did. That is why K is now in India. And other people too, they are eager to go somewhere.

MARGOT: Did you find a "sense of belonging" when you were there? A sense of: I belong here; it is okay for me to be here, I can be here for a long time.

COENIE: To answer that question; if other South Africans weren't there, then it certainly would have been a lot more difficult. Because if there is only a bunch of Taiwanese to mingle with, they don't mingle like you do. It is just, why do you want to go into a karaoke bar and sing irritating music the whole time? It is like watching the Blue Bulls or the Sharks these days. Certainly with the other South Africans too, there was a "sense of belonging," and the Taiwanese people went out of their way to help you, and to get you settled. But, I won't give up my time to mingle with them the whole time, because they are not your people, and it is not that easy.

MARGOT: So with time you got more from your own people than from the people who represent the culture where you were?

COENIE: Yes, but I was also lucky I wasn't as closed minded as many of my friends who would say: "No man, I get enough of them at school, so why must I mingle with them too?" I wasn't like that. I went to the night markets with many of the cute, beautiful Chinese teachers. And then we would go and have a drink, or eat something there. Even after I was in hospital I went to the movies with one of my cute nurses, and to shopping malls, and on the train. I even went to KTB's with another guy that sponsored us. He said: "Everything is on me, I'll buy you beer, and some food." Luckily not women, so don't be too worried. So I did many of those things with them. But the "sense of belonging" is nice just up until a month. You don't want to be in their company the whole time. You also want to mingle with your friends, your people.

MARGOT: Right now, you represent the Coenie you are, right now, as you are sitting on that chair. What from Taiwan contributed to the Coenie that you are at this moment? What do you think was the biggest influence that the Taiwanese culture had on you? Did it have any influence on you at all?

COENIE: I know I have already come a long way. I don't want to brag, but I am certainly much better off than most of my friends who haven't seen the world yet, who haven't seen other things and people yet. So just everything I experienced there and the people that I worked with had an influence on me. The fact that I was independent definitely had an influence on the fact that I am not the same Coenie now as I was before. I won't actually announce it or anything, but a lot of my friends and the people here in South Africa have a tunnel vision of how life must be, and how it is that religion must be, how it is that we are supposed to live and that is how this and that must be. But I am totally different about how I now see and think about things. The people in other countries are actually much better than the people here. The one thing that opened my eyes, I don't want to constantly refer to religion, but the nurses there who helped me in hospital, they are not like most of the people here "I am Christian, I will help you." They helped me through thick and thin. They sacrificed time. They probably took me out to eat for easily four, five or six times; big steak lunches. They easily only got a quarter of the money I got being a teacher in Taiwan. It is just that thing of don't judge people, that kind of thing. I also now know that there are other cultures that are not too bad.

MARGOT: So you would say being there rather contributed to who you are than to break down the person who you are?
COENIE: For sure yes, even the accident. I'm very glad it happened. I don't hold it against anybody, or against this or that. It also contributed to what I am now. The things I experienced there, a lot of good and a lot of bad, also contributed. I am very glad that both things happened.
MARGOT: So you thought about it, and you decided that you will rather take the useful things out of your experience than focus on that that could have been not so useful?
COENIE: Yes. It isn't always easy, but now if I see other people who are in different situations, people who didn't have the same experiences, who has the tunnel vision-thing, am I very happy for the type of things, good and bad, that happened to me. It broadened my head and mind totally.
MARGOT: What were the main things you learned about yourself in Taiwan?
COENIE: I am good with children. I am good with people. Because, I don't always compare myself to other people, it was much easier for me to get accepted by people from the Taiwanese culture than I to get accepted by many of my other friends and people. And that I can actually work, even if it is ten hours a day, which I can cope with. It is not so bad to do it. And I can be independent.
MARGOT: Do you think you would hold these ideas about yourself if you had not lived in Taiwan? You spoke about independence and working with people. Do you think these are things you would have known about yourself if you didn't go there?
COENIE: No. I always knew I had an easy way with people. Because, I always play the idiot, and keep my mouth shut, and just listen, even though I never listened to them. Or, I don't listen a lot to them. They think I am a good listener. But the thing that I could be a bit on my own, I wouldn't have known that. I knew it will always be nice, but I made a great success of it. Naturally, it had a lot of its advantages and disadvantages. I think that Taiwan surely summarized it that it was possible, and very nice, to do something like that.
MARGOT: How do you describe this concept of culture? What are the aspects you think which contribute to the idea of culture?
COENIE: Everything from religion to eating habits; the lifestyle. Naturally the lifestyle includes everything, from eating habits to religion, even the culture in those schools that are very different than the culture in our schools; totally, totally different.
MARGOT: How would you describe yourself when you left South Africa? If I had to say to you at the airport "Coenie tell me who, what, how and where you are?" What would you tell me?
COENIE: A man with a degree, well done. That is what everybody said to me. Naturally that is not how I felt.
MARGOT: How did you feel? What was your experience of yourself at that stage?
My experience was as now. I actually don't know what I want to do. But, I have the need for adventure, to experience something different. So that is what went on in my head. I didn't have a big goal like being a doctor, or to be this or that, or to do this or that, or to get married, those kinds of things. I think a good word for it is "undecided."
MARGOT: If I had to ask another important person in your life, it doesn't matter who it was, that day at the airport when they said goodbye to you to give me a description of Coenie, what do you think they would have told me?
COENIE: There is Stephan who sent me an email or sms when I was in Taiwan, that at that time he didn't have the guts to have done what I was doing. They thought it took a lot of guts. It is actually something that he always wanted to do, but he didn't have the guts to do it. He followed the traditional route of lets go and study, girlfriend, get married, have children, work the whole time. That type of thing. It works for some people, but for me it never would have worked.

MARGOT: Do you think it will change?
COENIE: Maybe I'll feel different tomorrow. When you meet that one person, then you will probably know, but, as I'm feeling now, I feel like it's not going to change quickly. I fear being trapped in a relationship, and then you are married. I see this with a lot of my friends and people who get married. It is nice for the first year or two, but then it is just a routine again. For some people it works well, for example Stefan and his wife. It is clear that they are still madly in love, but, for other people with my mentality and personality, it is not going to work now, I think.
MARGOT: How will you describe yourself now that you have had the Taiwan experience? At that time you would have described yourself as being undecided.
COENIE: Actually, you will get a better answer from somebody who is planning to come back to South Africa, because, I would still be in Taiwan now if it wasn't for the accident. No wait, maybe I would be back by now. My plan was to stay on for two years after the first year. But, I would still describe that Coenie now as undecided. Because of the brain injuries I suffered. I hear that it does have an effect on you. Like I said a while back, I'm definitely a much broader minded guy than the one who went beforehand. So I am much more broad minded, and know a lot more about life than before.
MARGOT: Am I right to understand that it was a good experience for you to have done it?
COENIE: Certainly, yes. Wonderful, even though there were marks left from the whole Taiwan expedition, not just from the accident, but sometimes you don't have any money, or sometimes you have more than enough money. Then you buy more than enough things. So, you have your advantages and disadvantages. At the end of the day, it was, including the accident, certainly a positive thing. I think the accident made it more positive, now that I think about it. I now have more contact with the people who helped me in the hospital than the other people I still have in Taiwan. I still have three or four of the cute nurses on my phone. I am a people's person, so I enjoy meeting other people.
MARGOT: If I would ask another important person about who they think you are now, what do you think they will say to me?
COENIE: Someone would also say I had a bad experience with the accident and everything, but including the accident, "He is more aggressive" because of all the injuries I have. But, if you don't focus on that the whole time, I think I am not as difficult as I was in the beginning. I also understand people in another different way. And to be negative is anti-cultural and anti-traditional. For example, I am sometimes negative about our culture or our traditions, not about our families, but maybe about the Afrikaners. And, even about the music I will say: "Listen here, what junk are we listening to?" So it is very negative about those kinds of things. But I don't know why. Maybe it is because of my experiences in Taiwan? I don't know. Maybe it opened my eyes. There is more to life than getting up and doing the same things over and over. We go to a rugby match on Saturday, we go to church on Sunday, and we braai on a Friday. Work, work, work, work, work; that is not for me.
MARGOT: What do you think contributed the most to this change in how you see yourself now?
COENIE: The fact that we are taught here in South Africa - as South Africans, Afrikaners, sometimes, I am not saying everybody – that, for example, the Muslims are screwed, the Hindus are a bunch of idiots, and they are like this or like that. But, when I was there, I only experienced love and happiness from those people. Then I started to think, wow, sometimes I can get along better with them than with my own people. Just the fact that so many of those people do and believe other things does not make them bad. I'm not saying that religion is playing a part in this. Many of them are atheists too, and Christians, and Buddhist and Taoists, and all of that. But everybody is very friendly and cute. Not everybody, but most of them. They also don't have that ethic of I'm doing this and I'm that – full of themselves. That is what people here in South Africa are doing. They are just friendly. They are who they are. They won't even say "I am lawyer this and that." They are just plain Jannie, or Frikkie. My friends had a servant

who wasn't even a servant. She is qualified, and she just wants to do something on a Saturday to keep herself busy and for some extra money. So she is this cute, clean, learned person who just wants to clean the floor, and those types of things. It opened my eyes. Naturally there are not only positive things, for example the bad smells. Every Saturday morning after I've been out for the evening, when we went to bed at 02:00, then those idiots starts at 06:00 in the morning with their noisy religious rituals, and banging the drums and ringing the bells. It is just incense around you and everywhere you look. That irritated me a lot. So you don't only have pleasant times.

MARGOT: Do you think that different descriptions of you being Coenie are different at deferent times and different situations? Do you think that each of us have different identities that we use at different times?

COENIE: Yes, for sure.

MARGOT: Do you think that your experience in Taiwan contributed to how you describe these different identities?

COENIE: Yes, sometimes in a good way, and sometimes in a bad way too.

MARGOT: So it opened some options for you that you didn't have in the past, and which you probably would not have had if you weren't there.

COENIE: Exactly yes. Before the whole Taiwan thing, I wouldn't get as mad at some of the things here in South Africa. And I mean very, very mad. For example people, culture, everything included. But I appreciate other things much more now that I am back. Before I went; you love this person, you love that person. But while I was away, and also the fact that I almost didn't make it, made me appreciate some people and some of the things more now that I am back in South Africa. It also played a part - even if the accident didn't happen - just the fact that I was away from my family. You can be away, you can make more money, yes that was what I did, and you can have nicer people to mingle with, every weekend the same people over and over. You do miss your parents and the friends you had here in South Africa. Although I don't see much of them now, you miss the whole feeling of it.

MARGOT: Would you say that it is about the distance? To come from Taiwan for a quick dinner isn't as easy as going to Bloemfontein for the weekend.

COENIE: Exactly. With Skype you can always eat together, but it is not the same. It is about being close. You can also see it with your friends that have been there for five, six years. You can see they have a screw loose in their heads, because they can go on and on about the fact that it is better in Taiwan and I am not going to get a job in South Africa. But you clearly know that there is only one thing they need, and that is friends and family. I could see that. I even heard it from one or two of the guys. It is family, my own people, friends and things too. I also see things much more different. I am not as bonded with some things as I was before I went to Taiwan. For example, I will not give my right toe for rugby anymore, to go and watch the Bulls, and to shout, and to take off my shirt. I am not like that anymore. But there are people who enjoy it, and it is fine. They enjoy it the right way. Trust me, I have seen a few interesting things at Loftus. It is not the fact anymore that if I'm going to miss the game, I'm going to break my right thumb. There are things that are not so important to me. There are also things that are more important to me.

MARGOT: What is more important to you?

COENIE: Just energy and satisfaction. I realize that you must enjoy your life every day. It is not that I'm doing it now, but after the accident, what does it help to just go on and on and making yourself tired, and then the next day you are in an accident, and then you are dead. What does it help? You must reward yourself with a few things.

MARGOT: So for you it is about now.
COENIE: Relationships with other people are also important. At one time I actually didn't care. Other people are important in one's life. What is nice about going through life alone?
MARGOT: Are there some things that upset you now, but didn't before?
COENIE: Sure. Beggars. I did not see even one beggar in Taiwan. I did see one guy trying to change a wheel while he was under the influence, but he wasn't a beggar. Beggars and internet is a big thing. At home in Taiwan every night I could download movies and music too legally and for free: I could just click, click, [and download]three to four new music albums that would cost me R800 here. So that is one thing that irritates me a lot. The speed, you can't get info here very quickly. Here you have to wait. I feel very strongly about how "common" my own people are. Afrikaans people, how the irritate me when I go to the Afrikaans festivals. I will express my opinion in such a way that I would upset my brothers and my parents about how common the Afrikaners really are and how irritating our own people are. It didn't bother me as much before I went. It was a big thing in my heart when I came back. The common music always bothered me, but more so now that I am back. So, it is music and people that irritates me much more. I won't say that it is just my own people, Afrikaans people, but I recognize it much easier in other people too. English people, Muslims, Indians, black people also irritate me easier now. I don't know why. Maybe I was too used to the Taiwanese people. The transport is a big problem. In Taiwan, even though I couldn't walk, I could get a taxi at a good rate, and a train. If the public transport was the same, I could get to Johannesburg or Pretoria within half an hour. I miss that. And another thing about this place that irritates me, is how everything is more expensive: cell phone contracts, computers, everything is more expensive. There are a lot of things that I can mention to you. That is why I still have my clothes from Taiwan. It is not expensive.
MARGOT: How did your lifestyle, your type of life and your life expenses influence your satisfaction with being there?
COENIE: On a big scale, because if you look at my friends now, the people who like watching television, and movies, and shopping malls, who likes cigarettes and drinking beer. Those who like eating chocolates, and cake and everything, everything is just cheaper there. Most of those things are much easier to get hold of and cheaper. It is cheaper living there and driving around. You can see that South Africa isn't a first world country. People who are going to India may answer this question in a different way.
MARGOT: Do you think it would increase your satisfaction with the country if you were to be a beggar there?
COENIE: No, money plays a big part, because there is a Seven Eleven that is open 24/7, and if you are one of those people that feels like drinking some milk 03:00 in the morning, or some coffee, then you just go to the shop if you don't have some milk in your fridge. Or if you are visiting some friends, and 04:00 the beer is finished, somebody can go and get some more. All of those things are just easier.
MARGOT: How did you cope with the language?
COENIE: In the beginning it was very frightening. I used a lot of body language. If I wanted to ask if it is pork, I had to make sounds like a pig. If I asked if it is cow, I had to make sounds like a cow. Usually they think you are crazy. I took some Chinese lessons. I started a bit late with that - about two months before my accident. I learned how to count. I learned the name of colours, and the names of animals. It is irrelevant if you want to ask for pork or beef now. Small things like saying it is warm, thank you and goodbye. It was difficult in the beginning. With time you start to remember small things, like what coffee is called, and what one is. If you had friends like I usually had, standing next to you in a restaurant, they could help you communicate. The guys who are there for five or six years can speak Chinese very well.

MARGOT: Did you feel valued while you were there? Did you feel that they appreciated you?
COENIE: Here in South Africa a lot of the people are idiots. It is like when you are a teacher here, they feel sorry for you. Or if you do this, you did not make it in the real world. Then you just go back to it. If you only earn this much money, you are a "screw up". They treat you like Brad Pitt if you are a white teacher in Taiwan. You get more money than the Chinese teachers. You get more money than you would have got in South Africa. You get the money, and you have the status of being white. You are a different culture. So I felt valued.
MARGOT: What hobbies did you have there?
COENIE: Nothing at first. Some of my friends whom have been there for a while told me that if you don't have a hobby, you are not going to make it there. I started going to the gym, but that didn't last long. Then I started to swim. That also didn't last long. Guitar lessons, I just went for three or four lessons, and then I was in the accident. It was a start. The Chinese lessons were also a hobby. The one thing I enjoyed the most was Taekwondo. I did it for a month, and got my yellow belt in a month's time. They say it is quite good. While I was busy with my second month, the accident happened. I was actually wearing my Taekwondo clothes when it happened. That is the reason they not here. Cute white pants, yellow belt and a shirt that I'm very disappointed that they had to cut it, because they couldn't pull it off my body. I don't know why. I enjoyed Taekwondo the most.
MARGOT: Will you practice Taekwondo here?
COENIE: My leg is still a bit stiff. The femur, I still have a pin in my leg. So I can't. I first have to get the leg strong enough.
MARGOT: But, it is something you would like to do again?
Yes, for sure. I enjoy it very much. It is brilliant exercise. Abdominal muscles kick in. We even went jogging. We did push-ups, all of those things. My friends and I went for an hour and a half once a week. That could work, that was nice
MARGOT: Were you included by the community, or did they expect you to do something on your own with your own people?
COENIE: They mainly expected you to do your own thing. In Taiwan they do everything together as a family, so the fact that grandpa and grandma couldn't speak or understand English made it difficult. But I went to stuff like that. I didn't enjoy it much, because one person can speak English, so that one person speaks English to you. She sits next to you, obviously. And the rest only spoke Taiwanese. She can't speak to you the whole time, so most of the time you just sit there and listen. Even after the hospital, I went with the nurses to a steak dinner that they paid for. For the first two minutes you are the focus point. You can only speak so long with your nurses friends, because she wants to speak to her friends too. So then you just sit there and mind your own business. You listen to what they are saying, even if you don't understand them. At the last school I was at, the boss made a lot of effort. He helped me a lot when I was in hospital. He told the doctors that he will pay. I had the best doctors. He did this thing where every now and then he would invite all the foreigners to his home, or even sometimes to a restaurant. Just to make us feel included. I was there for two of those occasions. Then we would see his family, his children, and we all mingle together. It wasn't always possible. It happened once in a blue moon. But, he had the intention. He knew that we worked together every week, so we didn't want to spend every weekend with them too. It is just how it is. I think they have the same conclusions. I don't know. They made an effort, but more often we mingled with our own people. That isn't always fun. Because, then you see each other each week and every weekend. So then sometimes there is a lot of unpleasantness. Sometimes R phoned me and said that he is not going to one of those things, so let's have a braai together, or we ordered some pizzas and just enjoyed each other's company. We were not in the mood to mingle with the group.

MARGOT: If you had to sum up your experience, what would your summary be?
COENIE: It was a mixed time, with good and bad things. I will do it again. I think everybody should go to a different country if they have the chance. The next time I will do it differently. I will be more prepared in my head for what to expect!
MARGOT: Coenie, did you find this conversation useful and if you did, in what way?
COENIE: It was nice to speak about Taiwan and not focus on my accident. It was good to think about those experiences again. I really liked speaking about it. It has brought some good memories back for me.
MARGOT: Thank you, Coenie, for speaking with me about your experiences and your views about migration. You have helped me in an important way. If you think of something you want to add or change, please email me.

STORY GUIDE Guiding Questions About Your Experience of Migration			
PERSONAL INFORMATION			
Your Name:	**Date:**	**Would you like to use a pseudonym and what should your pseudonym be?**	
Галина, Galina		Алина, Alina	
Your Age:	**Your gender:**		**Where were you born?**
50	Ж, F		Молдавия, СССР.Republic of Moldova
Which countries have you lived in since originally leaving your country of birth? How long did you live in each country?			
Италия , 10 лет. Italy, For 10 years			
MIGRATION **(***A migrant is seen as someone who stays outside of their usual country of residence for at least one year.***)**			
How would you describe your overall experience of migration? Could you please tell me a story that would an illustration of your experience?			
Трудно сказать. It's difficult to tell.			
What <u>pulled</u> you towards migrating (made you consider migration as an option)?			
Материальные и личные проблемы. Material and personal problems			
What <u>pushed</u> you (eventually made you go) to migrate?			
Пример друзей. My friend's examples.			
Why did you decide on the country you eventually migrated to? Was this country what you expected? How so?			
Были знакомые, которые уже уехали и обещали помочь. People who have already came out and who have promised to help me.			
What were your hopes and dreams and desires for your migratory experience? Do you think you contributed to the country you migrated to and is your contribution in line with your hopes and dreams and desires about migrating?			
Личные и материальные проблемы решились, но возникли трудности с работой. The personal and material problems were solved but troubles with workappeared.			
What was going on in your life when you left your country of origin? What were some of the things you preferred for your life and what were some of the things you would have preferred to *not* have been going on in your life before you left?			
У меня была интересная работа, но зарплата, которой не хватало на достойную жизнь. I had an interesting job but the salary was not enough for decent life.			
Would you go through the migratory process again? Why/why not? Who encouraged you to go?			
Да, потому что здесь у меня сложилась личная жизнь. I had a successful personal life there.			
What did you find difficult and/or easy about the process of migration? What would you do differently if you were to redo the process again?			
Профессионально я чувствую себя невостребованной, я бы не теряла время и пошла учиться здесь. I feel professionally unrecognised; I would not waste time; and would to study here.			
What do you think the pros and cons of migration are in general? Would you encourage others to migrate?			
Про – отношения в семье, контро – сложности в профессиональной сфере. Pros- relationships in family, cons- the difficulties in the professional field.			

What do you think the governments of your receiving country should/could do to make it easier for you to be there?
Ничего, им не до меня. Nothing, it is up to me.
CULTURE **(***e.g., the ways that people, living in different part of the world, classify and represent their experiences.***)**
When you think about growing up, can you think of one specific cultural tradition (e.g., birthdays) passed on to you by your family? What was the cultural flavour of the house you grew up in? What are some of the earliest memories of these cultural influences you can recall? Can you remember any rituals, celebrations or traditions of your family? What cultural values did your family teach you? Can you tell a story that would represent an illustration of the cultural ethos of your family?
В моей семье много читали, традиций особенно никаких не было. My family read a lot. There were no special traditions.
What cultural influences are still now important to you? How much of a factor in your life has your cultural background been?
Я постоянно чему-то учусь – это из семьи. I always learn something- I learned this is from my family.
Can you think of one specific cultural tradition or influence passed on to you by society in your country of origin?
Ценность дружбы, если это можно назвать традицией. Friendshipis a value; you can call it a tradition
How did you experience the new culture you moved into? Difficult? Easy? What made it so?
Трудно сказать. It's difficult to tell.
How much of the culture you moved into did you absorb, do you think? Are you OK with what you absorbed? What did you absorb that you would rather now discard? Would you prefer to move away from your adopted culture back to your culture of origin? Why/Why not? What do you still find strange about your new culture? Could you tell a story or tell about an incident that would describe how you interacted with the other culture you now found yourself immersed into?
Мне трудно принять неискренность, которая здесь считается хорошим воспитанием. It's hard for me to accept dishonesty. Here it is considered a good education.
What do you think the idea of culture includes? How would you describe it? If you had to write a definition about the concept of culture, what would that definition include?
Местная культура в основном это умение жить вкусно , красиво и спокойно, а культура вообще - это + многое другое. Local culture is the ability to live tasty, nice and quiet, culture in general is more than that +this+ more other things.
Do you experience a sense of belonging/community in the country you migrated to? Does this community which you have now become part of include local people or did you gravitate more towards your 'own' people who lives in your new country?
Мне обидно, когда плохо говорят об итальянцах так же, как и о русских, я себя отождествляю с этими двумя странами. I hurt when somebody says bad [things] about Italian people or about Russian people. I identify myself with those two peoples.
IDENTITY **(***e.g., how you would describe yourself.***)**
What in your adopted country shaped you the most in describing yourself as you would at the moment? Why do you think this shaped you in the way it has? What would you describe as the main things you learned about yourself whilst living in this culture different to your own?
Я поняла, что я очень маленькая, в смысле мелкая. I realized that I was very small.

What are some of the best memories about the culture you migrated to and do you hold some less preferable memories about this culture? Would you mind telling about a less preferable memory?
Там я была намного более привлекательна и интересна для окружающих. There I was much more attractive and interesting for the other.
What did you accomplish in the country you moved to that you think you would not have accomplished in your country of origin?
У меня очень хорошие отношения с мужем, там у меня не получалось. I have a very good relationship with my Italian husband. In Moldova the relationship with my ex-husband did not work.
Do you think there is something that you would like the Authorities (e.g., United Nations, International Office of Migration, Governments) world-wide to know that might help migrants all over the world?
Профессиональная ориентация должна быть эфективной. Vocational guidance should be more effective.
When you left your country of origin, how would you have described yourself at that stage? How would one of the significant people in your life have described you at that time?
Мне надо было менять жизнь, и я надеялась. I had to change life, and I hoped.
How would you describe yourself now that you have migrated? How would one of the significant persons in your life now describe you?
Мне ничего не хочется. I want nothing.
Would you like to change anything about those descriptions you mentioned above? Who/what contributed the most to the change in the way you described yourself before you migrated and to your description of yourself now?
Трудно сказать. It's difficult to speak about.
Are there times when you would describe yourself differently to the way you described yourself above? When would those times be and what would contribute to the descriptions about yourself that would be relevant at that stage?
Трудно сказать. It's difficult to speak about.
Do you think different descriptions of yourself are true for you about yourself at different times in your life/day and when different circumstances prevail?
Трудно сказать. It's difficult to speak about.
How would you describe your personal identity or sense of self after your stay in your new country? Would this description be different to how you would have described yourself before you migrated?
Я растеряна, конечно мне бы хотелось быть спокойной и уверенной в себе. I am confused, of course, I would like to be more calm and more confident.
... and finally ...
Did we leave anything out that you would have liked to discuss during this 'conversation'? Please tell any other stories which you think are important and representative of the process of migration between countries.
Нет. No.
Can you think of any other questions which should have been included in this 'conversation'?
Если вы хотите – мы могли бы просто поговорить, может это было бы Вам полезно. If you want – we should to talk, may be it be useful for you.

KON'S STORY

My name is Kon Kornelio Madut. Kon is the African part of my name, and Kornelio is an Italian/Catholic name acquired by belonging to the Roman Catholic Church. Both my first name Kon and middle Kornelio were my grandfather's name given to me by my father. This leaves me without a name. My father did that in honour of his father to keep sprit of his father alive in me as per traditional practice of the Luo tribe of Southern Sudan. My Italian connection came in with the secret of Baptism, as I am a Catholic by my religious affiliation, and I was raised by a Catholic family in Southern Sudan. Madut, which I have been using as my last name, is indeed my father's name. In Southern Sudan, there is no emphasis on first and last name, as it is in the western societies. Individuals are known by both first name and father's name followed by a clan, or tribe that the individual belongs to.

I have grown up in the city of Wau in Southern Sudan a town of about approximately 136,932000 people, a city that I have acquired most of my earliest social skills and developed a universal sense of belonging and love of human beings. Social skills acquired through my earliest socialization in Wau have later helped me in life as an adult to relate and accommodate different world cultures from Middle East to the western society with no any feelings of alienation, or nuisance. I grew up in and socialized in Wau culture. We were taught as young people that all elders in the town regardless of their tribes, regions, or clans are our uncles, grand mothers, fathers or aunties, not "strangers." There was no such thing as a stranger in the town, as all were accommodated and accepted.

At the age of 7 years old, I have started my education journey from Khor El Madir primary school in Wau, and went to Audici Primary School to obtain my primary school certificate to qualify for Intermediate school. After I passed primary school certificate I was accepted to attend Wau Intermediate School. I had my Intermediate school certificate in 1980 and qualified for high School namely, Wau Day Secondary School in 1983. I have received my Secondary School certificate in 1987.

Wau (Arabic: واو Wāw; also Wow or Waw) is a city in southern Sudan on the western bank of the Jur River. It is the second largest city in Southern Sudan, with a population of 136,932. Located in mid western part of the region, the city is the capital of the Western Bahr El Ghazal state.

I left Wau, Sudan in 1987 after I passed my secondary school certificate, as it was not possible to apply to Universities from Wau by then due to the civil war that broke [out] between the Christian Southern and the Northern Muslim Government in Khartoum. I had an opportunity to apply for Egyptian Scholarship from Khartoum to go to Egypt for my post-secondary education. [It was] a scholarship offered to southern Sudanese Students by the Egyptian government to narrow the educational and skills gap between the North and the South of Sudan. I waited one year in Khartoum before the results of scholarship were announced.

Figure (1): *Map of Wau, Sudan*. geology.com/world/sudan-map.gif- [retrieved Nov.27, 2009].

Student and Displaced Person in Egypt

In 1988 I received a notice of acceptance to attend a community college at the Zagazig Institute of Commerce in Egypt [for] 2 years. However, I was not that keen to attend a community college, hence, I decided to reapply in 1989 for the same scholarship and came to Egypt to wait for results while attending the community College in Egypt, rather than waiting in Khartoum where I did not have enough resources to survive. I spent one year in Zagazig Institute of Commerce, Egypt, where I had my earliest experience with people that were culturally and ethnically different from me, and also to have sense of being in a second country for the first time.

In 1990 the outcome of my second application for the Egyptian Scholarship was announced, and I was accepted in the Faculty of Arts, Department of Sociology at Alexandria University. Accordingly, I left Zagazig for the City of Alexandria to start my first year's classes in May 1990. I completed my degree in May 1994 and remained in Egypt with many other displaced refugees from my home region in Southern Sudan who had left the country because of the civil war. In this regards, my parents had advised me not to come back to Sudan as well, as they had a perception that the Islamic government in Sudan is targeting young educated Christians from South Sudan in particular and Sudan in general. As a result, I decided to stay in Egypt until the political instability in Sudan changed. My decision to stay in Egypt then changed my identity from a Sudanese Citizen studying in Egypt, to a displaced person without a home country.

The Egyptian Government treats Sudanese migrants as displaced people, as they believe that both Egypt and Sudan are Arabic countries and a home for citizens of the two countries. However, all Sudanese in Egypt are required by the government to have a work permit as any refugees in the western society in order to be employed in Egypt. Most of displaced people worked in services sectors in jobs that Egyptian

citizen don't normally take. In Egypt, I was working in a furniture company full-time 13 hours a day, Monday to Friday for about only $ 50 a month.

As the situation of war kept getting worst in Sudan, the number of migrant continued to increase; their situation in Egypt began to deteriorate due to lack of services and resettlement programmes. As a result, most of western countries opened their doors to accept Southern Sudanese as immigrants in their countries.

Migration to Canada

Egypt as discussed above was known to Southern Sudanese as a country where they come to study, or take short term training and return home to continue in their practices, or look for better jobs. Hence, most of Southern Sudanese found in Egypt during the period of 1973 to 1990 were University and College students. However, things dramatically changed from early 90s, as waves of war-affected displaced southern Sudanese migrated to Egypt to escape atrocities of civil war between the Muslim North and Christian South in Sudan. It is worth noting that the African indigenous Southern Christian has been at war with Northern Arab Muslims North since the independent of Sudan in 1956. It is a conflict attributed to social, cultural, economic, and political and national identity in Sudan. In short, about 35% of the Northern Arabs Sudanese have been installed by English and Egyptian colonial rule as a new national government in Sudan after independence. This group continues to define Sudan in parameters of Arab and Islamic state, a definition that alienated the citizenship of majority of African Sudanese and placed majority of them in a disadvantageous status as far as rights, opportunities and identity are concerned.

In short, this is the background of reason [why] many southern left their homeland to seek refuge in neighbouring countries especially when the civil war between the south and north intensified in 1990s. At that time I was a second year University student in Alexandria Egypt. Many of us (students) became resources for many of [the] newly displaced [people] that come to Egypt in their early stages of resettlement as most of them don't know where to stay, where to go, or what to do. Churches in Egypt were the first to intervene after the number of people continued to increase and their situation began to further deteriorate.

Subsequently, the international organizations such as (IOM) International Organization for Migrants, in collaboration with the United Nations, interfered by accepting displaced people from the South and North alike as internally displaced people in Egypt, and referred them to countries that are willing to accept them as refugees. In this process, many Sudanese in general and southern Sudanese in particular have found themselves in countries such as Australia, United States of America, most of the European Union and Canada.

Southern Sudanese University students who had scholarships in Egypt - including myself - were in dilemma [about] what should happen after graduation as it was not possible to go back to Sudan. We see all our country men and women are leaving country in huge numbers to live permanently in Egypt. After my graduation in 1994, I found myself as a displaced person as people who just arrived from Sudan, and lost all entitlement to both Egyptian and Sudanese Scholarships. I then completed my application to the UNHCR to seek refuge in Egypt. However, the United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees has rejected my application due to reasons that brought me to Egypt as student regardless of war in my homeland (Sudan). I than applied to [the] Canadian Embassy which was accepting immigrants by then from Sudan to come to Canada as conventional refugees. My writing activities in social justice - especially [writing for daily newspapers in Egypt] about what has been happening in Sudan - , my

education background and knowledge of English has facilitated approval of my application to come to Canada as a Landed Immigrant in 1996. Landed Immigrant was my new construction of identity that I have acquired for 3 years before becoming a Naturalized Canadian Citizen in 2001 in Canada.

Migration for me then was all about education, better opportunities and prosperity in lands that understand concepts of human rights and good governance. My perceptions of discrimination and ethnocentricity were mostly linked to so call underdeveloped countries that I had always read about in literature. However, the status of first nation people, the identity and cultural struggle between Anglophone and Francophone, and the status of visible minority in Canada made me rethink the accuracy of my perceptions about what I thought of my new country (Canada). I still love most of [the] human and social values in Canada which always make me proud to call myself a Canadian: Values such as human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

Foreign Credentials and Working in Ottawa/Canada

Back to my journey to Canada. I arrived with a B.A. in sociology as stated. I asked [people] what to do to find job in my field? The common answer from practitioners in the field of employment was that I needed to do foreign credential assessment of my foreign degrees before applying for jobs to work in Canada. As such, I have completed my assessment through University of Toronto Comparative Education Services. The document I have received states the following statement as indicated in the below figure in page.

Even though I was very happy to receive my evaluation of credential assessment, which was determined to be equal to degrees from a reputable Canadian University, it took me years to understand that my degree is comparable to that of the Canadian degree, but not treated the same as one obtained from Canadian institution as far as employers concerned. Nonetheless, the last statement on the letter clearly indicated its limitation for an open competition in the Canadian Job Market with those who have completed their degrees in Canadian Institutions. If I had I known that beforehand, I would have started to focus on changing career or training at earlier stage of my arrival in Canada, or at least upgraded my degree.

From 1996 to the present date, I didn't materialise any benefit this document has offered me in terms of training, or employment in Canada. An as an employment Specialist by profession in Ottawa, I am still puzzled by why Foreign Trained Professionals (FTP) Participants are still being referred to complete their credential assessment regardless of time, emotion and cost involved in obtaining it.

In 2000 I came to a conclusion that the current process in place to move foreign trained professional to integrate into Canadian labour market, will not support my quest in finding a sustainable meaningful job in Ottawa, Canada. Hence, I tried to search for training options in areas with potential employment in my field of specialization. I thought of doing that through pursuing graduate studies in Sociology, or of starting a different line of professional training that [would] lead me to complete a diploma program at a Community College level to subsequently obtain a Canadian Education and work experience to add into my Canadian experience set.

As a result, I completed my application to do Social Services Worker program at Algonquin College in the City of Ottawa in August 2001. Indeed, after one year of intensive Social Services Program at Algonquin College, and completion of a Four-month work placement with the City of Ottawa municipal government in 2002, I was awarded a 3-month contract as a Case Coordinator with the City of Ottawa, Employment and Financial Assistance Branch. The City of Ottawa has continued to renew my contracts

till I become a permanent employee in 2006. In 2004 I decided to pursue graduate studies to further improve my chances for employment opportunity as I was not sure how long the City of Ottawa will keep me working with them. In doing so, I was trying Universities that would allow me to keep working and studying on part time, or distance basis because of full-time work commitments and family responsibilities. Having been working with the City of Ottawa, Employment and Financial Assistance Department for few years, I didn't consider studying in Canada as important as I first thought.

My perception about the barrier to the job market in Ottawa was rather more cultural and socially constructed by the gatekeepers (protectionism), and not where you obtained your degree (s). Most visible minorities job seekers I met at the City of Ottawa received their advanced degrees from Canada, however, these didn't make any different in their advancements within the organization. Bearing that in mind my decision to apply for graduate studies and to search for graduate schools that meet my professional aspirations was not limited to Canada only as the only path to jobs and educational advancement in Canada.

Accordingly, I have completed one application to the Athabasca University in Alberta, and another application to Fort Hays State University in Kansas, United States. I have received an offer of admission from both Universities, but I chose to study at Hays due to History of Institution as a public University serving students in Hays Kansas from 1902, under the Board of Regent of the State of Kansas. In 2004 I received letter of acceptance into the School of Graduate Studies to complete Master's degree, and graduated with Master of Liberal Studies specializing in Social Science with concentration in Sociology in May 2007. In Canada, I was requested again to provide a Canadian credential assessment for my American degree to be able to compete for work advancement. I didn't understand the reasons and rational behind their request, as I thought that - unlike overseas Universities - Fort Hays State University is accessible by phone, mail or email by all Canadian Universities should they require more information about equivalency, or authentication.

I then sent a copy of my evaluation to my file, and showed my direct manager and the district manager how this document looks. The document indeed is more about wording of verification and authenticity, more than a comparison of courses and equivalency of process and quality of subject matter. Unlike the majority of visible minorities in the city of Ottawa, I am writing this narrative from a perspective of someone who already has secure a job with a public organization providing an insights of migrant struggle to find and keep jobs in Canada.

As a non-English, ethnic and African Sudanese/Canadian native person, I do consider all of the degrees I have received - including the Canadian degree - as foreign. None of these degrees programs thought in my language or in the content of my culture. However, I have assumed that knowledge acquired could be relatively universal if [it was] disseminated not as an absolute knowledge, but understood and applied as local realities of given phenomena, cultures, society or communities within their given context.

As far as my work experience is concerned, I started my career with the City of Ottawa as a Case Coordinator. [This] staff assess and determine eligibility of residents in the City of Ottawa for financial and employment support. Subsequently, I was appointed as an employment specialist to assess, refer and place Social Services participants in jobs within the City of Ottawa. I have been with the city of Ottawa for the last 10 years.

STORY GUIDE
Guiding Questions About Your Experience of Migration

PERSONAL INFORMATION			
Your Name:	**Date:**	**Would you like to use a pseudonym and what should your pseudonym be?**	
Heike Guilford	**16.11.11**	No	
Your Age:	**Your gender:**		**Where were you born?**
33	Female		**Buchen, Germany**

Which countries have you lived in since originally leaving your country of birth? How long did you live in each country?

United Kingdom

MIGRATION

(*A migrant is seen as someone who stays outside of their usual country of residence for at least one year.***)**

How would you describe your overall experience of migration? Could you please tell me a story that would be an illustration of your experience?

I wanted to work in England ever since going on a pupil exchange to Halifax when I was 14. I finished my training and went to England in the hope to find full time employment as a nurse. I recall standing on Heathrow airport, with a case and a bag and no place to stay. I asked someone for the way to the tube, and the man answered me back, but I could not understand a word of it –I realised later on that he was speaking with a strong Scottish accent, which is why I could not make out what he said. I also remember trying to find some work to tie me over and being very surprised by the fact that pubs would not employ me as a barmaid due to "insufficient experience."

What <u>pulled</u> you towards migrating (made you consider migration as an option)?

Germany and German life style made me feel very constricted and constrained – it felt there was a huge expectation on me to work for some years, then give up work and have a family – it was not what I wanted and when I went to England before, it felt to me that there were more options and opportunities available to me.

What <u>pushed</u> you (eventually made you go) to migrate?

There were not enough nursing jobs in Germany and I saw work colleagues becoming very burned out from staying in a job they had done for over 20 years in the same place –I did not want to end up like this. I knew in my heart that it was not the life I wanted and I kept "dreaming" of being in England –I could literally see me already being there, working and being happy

Why did you decide on the country you eventually migrated to? Was this country what you expected? How so?

I always wanted to be able to speak fluent English – I saw some friends going to America, however, also felt that this was too far away –I wanted to be in a place that was still close to home in case of a crisis. England was a very different place to live and work in compared to being on holiday. It was very hard for me to find my feet –I lived in London for three months to start up with and realised that if I was to get hit by a car, it was likely that people would just go straight past me without stopping to help. It felt an extremely lonely place and things only improved once I got a job as a healthcare assistant in Leatherhead while waiting for my NMC PIN to come through. People in my first workplace were very welcoming and helpful and it felt like the right place to be for me at the time. In fact, when my registration came through, I did not want to leave!

What were your hopes and dreams and desires for your migratory experience? Do you think you contributed to the country you migrated to and is your contribution in line with your hopes and dreams and desires about migrating?
I wanted to be free to make my own choices in terms of my life and career. England has certainly given me this opportunity and I have no regrets at all. I very much hope that in the time I lived here, I made a difference in people's lives. I also hope that I may have inspired some people around me by following my dreams and achieving new goals. I am thankful for every experience this country has given me and certainly feel that it has enabled me to obtain more qualifications and have increased opportunities. England has got a "Can Do" attitude to life and I have learned here many things, which I would not even have attempted in Germany.
What was going on in your life when you left your country of origin? What were some of the things you preferred for your life and what were some of the things you would have preferred to *not* have been going on in your life before you left?
I grew up in a small village in the countryside and then left for a slightly bigger town to do my LD nurse training. I have three sisters and my parents were farmers –I was the only person, who wanted to go to work in care ever in my whole family and I recall having many a battle with my parents about this. My parents were very unhappy when I said I wanted to go and become a nurse and even more unhappy when I announced I would leave the country. I felt very upset as I knew in my heart that staying in Germany was the wrong thing to do. I had a very strained relationship with my parents before I left and even for the first couple of years in England. It was only when I started having a steady relationship and consequently got married, that things improved. My parents have come to accept my life in England and they are happy that I am happy. They also have accepted Gary as part of my family. Looking back, I had very dysfunctional relationships with men in Germany and I think that was also part of the reason for me to leave –in the hope that I could leave that behind too and make a fresh start. I miss parts of the culture from back home and obviously my family and friends, but I don't miss the German "lifestyle" as such and am happy to be here.
Would you go through the migratory process again? Why/why not? Who encouraged you to go?
I would go again –I have no regrets and I feel that because I followed my dream, I am a happier and stronger person. No one encouraged me to go, so I think that also made me stronger inside as I did follow my own dreams and made my own choices.
What did you find difficult and/or easy about the process of migration? What would you do differently if you were to redo the process again?
I can't really say, as most people would say, it was crazy to just go without having job, place to live, etc. I don't regret it as this experience was of great value to me. It probably would be better to have a bit more of an idea where to stay, where to work, etc.
What do you think the pros and cons of migration are in general? Would you encourage others to migrate?
I feel I can only speak for myself. Leaving your home and country is a big decision –I believe people need to be able to identify if it is the right thing for them and leave for the right reasons –not because they want to "run away" from their problems. I had to grow up very quickly in this country, so I would encourage anyone to think carefully about their motivation to migrate.
What do you think the government of your receiving country should/could do to make it easier for you to be there?
I remember getting a Social Security number and bank account was very difficult. It would help I think if that was an easier process for people, who have had secure employment and a bank account previously.

CULTURE **(***e.g., the ways that people, living in different part of the world, classify and represent their experiences.***)**
When you think about growing up, can you think of one specific cultural tradition (e.g., birthdays) passed on to you by your family? What was the cultural flavour of the house you grew up in? What are some of the earliest memories of these cultural influences you can recall? Can you remember any rituals, celebrations or traditions of your family? What cultural values did your family teach you? Can you tell a story that would represent an illustration of the cultural ethos of your family?
Homemade cakes for Sunday, birthdays and other special occasions. My mum insisted that I learn to bake at a very young age –I remember producing cakes, which were inedible due to the fact that I used to get distracted and forgot vital ingredients such as eggs or butter.
What cultural influences are still now important to you? How much of a factor in your life has your cultural background been?
I now bake German cakes when I feel home sick as I associate the smell of the cake with home
Can you think of one specific cultural tradition or influence passed on to you by society in your country of origin?
Having an "Advent Kranz" –a decoration with 4 candles and each Sunday in the 4 weeks before Christmas one gets lit up –I still make sure now I have one every year with fresh tree branches of needle [pine] trees.
How did you experience the new culture you moved into? Difficult? Easy? What made it so?
I found - and still do [find] - English culture easier as things seem less complicated than back home. At home, there is a lot of different customs –for instance, when people come to visit, I notice, the table is laid with matching plates, cups and nicely decorated in different colours each year –in England it's fine just to give people a mug with tea. Also, English people are very polite and not always say what they mean –this can be good, but also difficult –It took me time to work out that "This is nice" –sometimes means "This is a real bore!"
How much of the culture you moved into did you absorb, do you think? Are you OK with what you absorbed? What did you absorb that you would rather now discard? Would you prefer to move away from your adopted culture back to your culture of origin? Why/Why not? What do you still find strange about your new culture? Could you tell a story or tell about an incident that would describe how you interacted with the other culture you now find yourself immersed into?
I'm not sure. I sometimes find it hard to be "in between countries." I know that I will never be "British" regardless of how long I live here. And I feel very detached from Germany, and I feel that I don't know how things work at home anymore. For instance, if I can't find something in an English supermarket, people will be quick to help, go with you and locate the item you want. When I was in Germany recently, I could not find a magazine on the rail. I asked the sales assistant and she just said "Well, if it's not there, it means that we haven't got it!" I have come to accept that I'm not 100% part of the two cultures anymore due to not feeling a full part of either one of them.
What do you think the idea of culture includes? How would you describe it? If you had to write a definition about the concept of culture, what would that definition include?
Culture can mean a lot of things – music; traditions; common customs –I would describe it as a mixture of all of these things within a country or place to live. I notice that different parts of Great Britain have different cultural influences and feel –for instance, Ireland seems to have still a strong Celtic influence and culture that is being preserved.

Do you experience a sense of belonging/community in the country you migrated to? Does this community which you have now become part of include local people or did you gravitate more towards your 'own' people who lives in your new country?
I feel a sense of belonging with my friends and family and people at work. I do find a lot of things easier in England –for example, change is seen as a very positive thing here and opportunities to develop and grow are always welcome; whereas back home I feel that change is not perceived as a good thing and people automatically assume that "you are not satisfied with what you have" and that's not really "the done thing."
IDENTITY **(***e.g., how you would describe yourself.***)**
What in your adopted country shaped you the most in describing yourself as you would at the moment? Why do you think this shaped you in the way it has? What would you describe as the main things you learned about yourself whilst living in this culture different to your own?
I have learned that I can change –this has been very important to me, as I grew up with poor self esteem, very, very overweight and the perception that "we are just like this in our family." It has taken me years of hard work and emotional work, which I did in England to realise that you can achieve any goal you want as long as you have a plan on how to make this happen. The move and subsequent stay in England has made me into a stronger person, emotionally much stronger and also more understanding of my needs and those from others around me. I found that values from Germany have helped me a great deal –being organised, saving money, working hard to achieve goals in England; but that values in England –being positive about change, believing that I'm worthy of achieving good things - have led me to success and happiness in this country.
What are some of the best memories about the culture you migrated to and do you hold some less preferable memories about this culture? Would you mind telling about a less preferable memory?
I remember once going into a pub and ordering a Coke. I recall a man in the pub asking me, which country I come from. When I said Germany, he punched me in the face! That was certainly less pleasant! I also remember having a very traditional English Christmas when I worked as a care worker in Leatherhead –it was absolutely brilliant and I was made feel very welcome. I could not believe that I got 75 Christmas cards from staff and patients there!
What did you accomplish in the country you moved to that you think you would not have accomplished in your country of origin?
I was able to follow my dreams, go to university and have a career.
Do you think there is something that you would like the Authorities (e.g., United Nations, International Office of Migration, Governments) world-wide to know that might help migrants all over the world?
I think it would be good for people to have the opportunity to do more international work placements, to give people a chance to experience life and work in a different country.
When you left your country of origin, how would you have described yourself at that stage? How would one of the significant people in your life have described you at that time?
I would say that I was feeling low in general –I did not want to carry on working in Germany and I had some weird on –off relationship with a man, so the chance to escape it all was very attractive. I would think that some of my friends probably would describe me as a bit "crazy" at the time as I did not do the proper thing and applied for a job back home. Instead I went to England with just a case, a rucksack and no job! They also thought I was "quite brave" to do it.

How would you describe yourself now that you have migrated? How would one of the significant persons in your life now describe you?
"Happy and positive." I would also think that people around me would describe me as a generally happy person, who enjoys life.
Would you like to change anything about those descriptions you mentioned above? Who/what contributed the most to the change in the way you described yourself before you migrated and to your description of yourself now?
I think different experiences and different people around me changed me together with my emotional breakthrough. Once I came to realise that I am able and worthy of change, I started to experience positive change and became happier in myself. I am happy I followed my dreams as I can see other people in my family being very unhappy and feel that this is due to the fact that they did not follow their own dreams.
Are there times when you would describe yourself differently to the way you described yourself above? When would those times be and what would contribute to the descriptions about yourself that would be relevant at that stage?
I think everybody has low points and bad days sometimes –when I have a bad day, I certainly can be very stubborn and upset and not coping well with setbacks. However, these are short-lived.
Do you think different descriptions of yourself are true for you about yourself at different times in your life/day and when different circumstances prevail?
Yes.
How would you describe your personal identity or sense of self after your stay in your new country? Would this description be different to how you would have described yourself before you migrated?
I feel happier and satisfied with my new life. I feel that I am happy due to achieving my goals and thriving on new challenges.
... and finally ...
Did we leave anything out that you would have liked to discuss during this 'conversation'? Please tell any other stories which you think are important and representative of the process of migration between countries.
I just also wanted to say that "validation" from my parents has been very important to me. –My father never made any emotional statements when I lived back home. One day, after being here 2 years, he took me back to the airport and said "You know, I really like you!" I recall just crying and feeling very happy!
Can you think of any other questions which should have been included in this 'conversation'?
No –this certainly was very thorough!

STORY GUIDE
Guiding Questions About Your Experience of Migration

PERSONAL INFORMATION			
Your Name:	**Date:**	**Would you like to use a pseudonym and what should your pseudonym be?**	
	Nov. 2011	Stella	
Your Age:	**Your gender:**		**Where were you born?**
37	Female		Greece

Which countries have you lived in since originally leaving your country of birth? How long did you live in each country?

I lived in the United States for 15 years and now I have been in England for almost 2 years.

MIGRATION

(*A migrant is seen as someone who stays outside of their usual country of residence for at least one year.***)**

How would you describe your overall experience of migration? Could you please tell me a story that would be an illustration of your experience?

When I decided to pursue my university studies in the United States, migration was for me both exciting and inevitable. I grew up in Greece, in a small conservative town where I had no contacts with migrants during my time of growing up. I had a strong desire to continue my university studies and I did not have that opportunity in my own country. Before I migrated, I also had a strong desire to meet foreigners; I used to be curious about diversity as I wanted to discover how I was different from and similar to others who came from other countries.

I first migrated to Boston, USA, and saw migration as a long trip, an adventure, an opportunity to get to know a culture which I first imagined it to be similar to the one I was exposed to in Hollywood movies. I envisioned a very active, adventurous life –a life which could bring all kinds of magical opportunities where personal dreams could come true! I felt excited to be in a city that was very different from my own. My search for knowledge coincided with my exploration of a very different culture. Exploring new geographical places and cultural practices, speaking a different language, and getting to know individuals from diverse backgrounds were all stimulating experiences for me. Migration was felt as an opportunity of achieving a personal fulfilment, of becoming someone satisfied with personal achievements and adventures.

On the other hand, migration also meant for me a longing for my own culture, family, and home. As time passed by, I also felt alienated being a migrant as my old sense of identity had to be more and more compromised in the process of assimilating practices and ideologies different from the ones I grew up with. The foreign language I spoke couldn't capture all that I wanted to say, the foreign food I ate lacked rich smells and tastes, my interactions with foreigners were felt awkward and alienating. I became self-conscious as I needed to be more and more careful of expressing cultural views different from those that my interlocutors had. I had to explain about my culture to others in order to feel understood and belonged instead of me being my culture spontaneously, effortlessly, and aimlessly.

What <u>pulled</u> you towards migrating (made you consider migration as an option)?

Migration was necessary for me as I wanted to continue my University studies. It was my chance to fulfil my dream. I was also pulled towards migrating with the idea that I would be independent from my family and freer to do what I liked. It gave me a sense of empowerment as I overcame hurdles and difficulties entirely on my own. Finally, migrating to a more developed cultural city than my own hometown was seen as an exciting opportunity, knowing that I would have all the necessary resources to expand my

horizons.

What <u>pushed</u> you (eventually made you go) to migrate?

For my first migration, it was my passion to pursue my studies to a discipline I really liked. After I finished my studies, I no longer desired to stay in the United States as I wanted to be nearer home and my family. I felt emotionally drained and tired of being so far away from home. Whilst I was happy when I first migrated to the US for my studies, I felt more pushed to migrate again, at this time to England, when I couldn't find a job related to my field in my country. After I completed my studies in the US, I stayed in Greece for 7 months looking for a job. During that time, though, I felt quite strange in my own country because I also found it difficult to assimilate again into my own culture. My second migration was necessary to find work. It was also felt as an exciting anticipation to be exposed to a new culture with new opportunities for my life. But, I did not feel the same level of excitement as before. My second migration is felt more as a push than pull. As I have grown older, I have found it more difficult to be in a foreign country where I am required to assimilate to new cultural practices and find new friends. What was entirely new and stimulating for me during my first migration, it has been more alienating and less exciting in my second migration.

Why did you decide on the country you eventually migrated to? Was this country what you expected? How so?

I first migrated to Boston. It was so much more than I expected! It was different, liberal, large (wide roads, big sized houses, big cars, comfortable spaces, green with enormous parks and lakes), cultural (with universities, highly intelligent people all around, amazing libraries, bookstores, theatres, and museums), and diverse with so many different minorities and spoken languages. Every corner of the city had something new, stimulating, and different to offer. I then migrated to Pittsburgh where I lived there for 7 years. I did my doctoral degree there and it was also an exciting experience. I met brilliant people. It gave me amazing career experiences in clinical practices, research, and teaching. It was a lot more than I expected in a sense that I met so many interesting individuals and reached my own potentialities a lot more than I expected. Then I moved to England, at this time not as a university student but as an employee, and so my migration has been felt more as mundane and less exciting. England has been pretty much what I initially expected –I perceive the Eastern English culture the same as the culture of Eastern states in the United States.

What were your hopes and dreams and desires for your migratory experience? Do you think you contributed to the country you migrated to and is your contribution in line with your hopes and dreams and desires about migrating?

My dream was to complete my studies and feel satisfied with my acquired knowledge. Being in different cultures, I learnt a lot about people who have very different views on values and ways one should live life. I learnt how to be tolerant to difference. The experience and the frustration I felt for getting to understand another person different than me was an eye opener; the whole process of getting to accept difference was an acquired knowledge. Because I interacted and lived with foreigners, I also shared my own difference with them and felt that I contributed to them. I shared my own learnt wisdoms, hopes, and desires to them and influenced their thinking in some positive ways.

Lots of my friends were also migrants – some of them were from my own country and others from other countries—and I became close to them because we all shared something quite common: being away from home, having to overcome all kinds of difficulties on our own, and having dreams, goals, struggles, and hopes in a foreign country.

What was going on in your life when you left your country of origin? What were some of the things you preferred for your life and what were some of the things you would have preferred to *not* have been going on in your life before you left?

Would you go through the migratory process again? Why/why not? Who encouraged you to go?

Before I migrated to the United States, I had to get a visa and provide proof of financial independence. It was a nightmare! My father had to borrow money from a friend to put it into my bank account so we could get a bank statement. This process had to be repeated on a number of occasions to get the US visa from my country. First time, I got a visitor's visa in order to come to the US and look for appropriate colleges. My relatives, who lived in the US, helped me. They even called the ambassador to grant me with the visa and thankfully he did. My relatives persuaded my parents for me to come to the US and I also felt very encouraged by my relatives.

I wouldn't prefer to go through the migratory process again. It was a difficult process. When I finally got accepted from one of the universities, I had to apply for scholarship. In the American Embassy in Greece, I had to provide a sufficient proof that I was financially capable to live and pay tuition without working. These were moments where I felt that my future was dependent on their decision of getting or not getting the visa.

What did you find difficult and/or easy about the process of migration? What would you do differently if you were to redo the process again?

My migration processes have been both interesting and difficult. My first migration was somewhat smooth because I had some support from my relatives. It was also an exciting process as I was travelling to the US to attend what I desired the most at that time – college. Leaving home for the first time, however, it was also very difficult. I used to worry a lot about my family leaving them behind. Before I left to the US, I used to help them out a lot. My mother used to be frequently sick and needed support – my father had lots of problems of his own. When I first left to the US, my father had a heart attack. My mother, as sweet as she was, did not ask me to come back and did not even tell me the news at the time my father was at the hospital – I learnt it much later on. So, I had feelings of guilt for my family and also a sense of high responsibility to overcome all kinds of personal hurdles on my own at that time. I couldn't speak English. When I first went to my college classes, I couldn't understand a single word from the lecturers. I also had the pressure from my college to get grades of B+ and up in order to keep my scholarship. I did not make it in the first year, so I lived hell to persuade the committee to keep me there. They did, but it was a long process for them to decide it. By the second year, I finally managed it. I used to open the dictionary for every single sentence I was reading. I finally was able to learn the special vocabulary for every course I took and managed it: sociology, human development, and philosophy – each course had its own vocabulary which I had to learn in order to understand what I was reading and take the exams.

When I went for my master's degree, I did so much. I earned a partial scholarship from the university, but I had to pay fees every semester. The problem was that the university did not allow you to register for the next semester if you did not pay the previous semester's fees – the fees were $1500 per semester. Well... I used to work part time at school, part-time at a restaurant, and part time as an overnight counsellor. To find work was a huge difficult process – but somehow I did. The exciting part of my life was that I met a fantastic mentor there and did research with her. For the first time, I was introduced to Foucault, post-structuralism, and feminism. I loved it. I finished the program finally with good grades. But I have to say, my memories of my master's program were also depressing. Except my experience of working with my mentor, all the other aspects of it were quite dark for me. My nose often bled from stress and lack of sleep.

When I went to my Ph.D., things were brighter for me except the very beginning. In the very first month of my program, my father got diagnosed with lung cancer. The doctor told us that he will only live for about 6 months. My school gave me permission to go home back and forth to support my parents. After he died, I absorbed myself into my Ph.D. which soothed my grief of my loss. My doctoral program fully supported me financially, so I did not have to work outside the University. I was though poorly paid and had to live with very limited resources. It was again stressful but not as much as before. I got very much absorbed into my work and loved all the bits of it. At that time, I thought that the whole experience was a miracle to have on my hands. I got tremendous support from various professors and friends. It was a beautiful dream coming true.

My second migration has been a lot easier. I came to England already having a job and not as many responsibilities as I used to. The difficult part of it is my feeling of loneliness and monotony. It is great I work in my field, but not so great to do things in a country that makes you feel not as worthy and interested in what I do. Compared to my experiences in the United States, in England I do not really have the stimulation and social support to do creative work and develop skills that would be satisfying for me. Although I love my field very much, I feel that I haven't found the right place of work quite yet. It was soothing, however, to hear from an Italian colleague of mine that he lived in England for 7 years and changed 5 jobs already! He told me that he too has felt that in this country unfortunately one is feeling pretty much alone and does not have much of an opportunity to develop own interests and skills as he/she would hope for. Well...one the one hand, I am grateful of having a privileged job, on the other hand, I am trying to be patient to find something that would fit me better.

What do you think the pros and cons of migration are in general? Would you encourage others to migrate?

Yes, I would encourage others to migrate from Greece to another country for a little while, at least. I would especially encourage it if one wants to achieve personal goals and cannot do so in one's own country. In my country, I have friends who are quite unhappy and dissatisfied with themselves because they never had the chance to pursue their own career dreams or because they are currently unemployed. Some of my friends prefer to stay unemployed for years than living abroad. They can't live in another country, because as they have told me, they would feel alone. I think these are the major pros and cons of migration. Being in a new country, you feel intensely alone at times, and you even have to give up relationship commitments. On the other hand, migration is necessary when one desires to expand his or her horizons or find work.

What do you think the government of your receiving country should/could do to make it easier for you to be there?

It would be helpful of course if Greece remains in the EU so I can be considered an EU citizen and continue to come and go in Europe as I like. It would also be helpful if Britain does not veto its membership from the EU. Anyway...

The government of England would make it easier for me if it continues to reinforce Laws of Equal Opportunities for everyone in the workplace and Equal Justice in Laws and Policies for everyone. Mandatory trainings on diversity in workplaces are also very helpful as it helps everyone to mind minorities with dignity, respect, and sense of equality.

CULTURE

(*e.g., the ways that people, living in different part of the world, classify and represent their experiences.***)**

When you think about growing up, can you think of one specific cultural tradition (e.g., birthdays) passed on to you by your family? What was the cultural flavour of the house you grew up in? What are some of the earliest memories of these cultural influences you can recall? Can you remember any rituals, celebrations or traditions of your family? What cultural values did your family teach you? Can you tell a story that would represent an illustration of the cultural ethos of your family?

My parents used to be very active in social circles. We had lots of family friends and used to eat out and eat in at our homes together frequently. We also used to go on trips together with friends. My house used to be filled with friends. I grew up in a relatively small town and there was a strong sense of community, fun, and values. I used to spend long hours with my close friends at coffee shops and cinemas and had lots of fun with them. We trusted each other and had lots of laughs. My family also celebrated religious holidays – we used to go on short trips to monasteries and I grew up with the experience of spirituality (we attended some fasting periods and other religious practices relevant to the holiday). Christmas and Easter were for us more spiritual than commercial holidays. In fact, sometimes, we did not even exchange gifts during Christmas. We had friends, lots of food, our tree, special wine, champagne – and these were all the gifts we had.

What cultural influences are still now important to you? How much of a factor in your life has your cultural background been?

Spirituality and friendships are still important to me. With my migrations, however, and my very, very busy life, I have lost of these factors in my life. Being in a new country, I feel that I have acquaintances than real friends, and I hardly, if ever, really manage to do some fasting. But these are very important factors still in me.

Can you think of one specific cultural tradition or influence passed on to you by society in your country of origin?

How did you experience the new culture you moved into? Difficult? Easy? What made it so?

Both: easy and difficult. Easy because I feel quite privileged as a migrant. I migrated to cultural and well developed parts in the world. Through migration, I received a lot more than I would have received if I were in my country. So, I acquired lots of comforts and lots of opportunities to be part of a cultural life. It has been difficult too because I do not really get a sense of solidarity as I do when I am in Greece – basically, a migrant is pretty much on his/her own and has to overcome own difficulties independently. In Greece, if one needs a lift or is sick, he or she is more likely to ask friends to help out – I grew up in neighbourhoods which had strong sense of community. My communal life was lost when I migrated.

How much of the culture you moved into did you absorb, do you think? Are you OK with what you absorbed? What did you absorb that you would rather now discard? Would you prefer to move away from your adopted culture back to your culture of origin? Why/Why not? What do you still find strange about your new culture? Could you tell a story or tell about an incident that would describe how you interacted with the other culture you now find yourself immersed into?

I think I absorbed a lot from the cultures I migrated into. My style, ideologies, tolerance to difference, and listening skills – all changed for the better! I learnt to work hard, to go after what I desire the most, and realize that that [what] is at times impossible, can become possible. I realized that without support from various people, it wouldn't be possible to manage my hurdles in life. So, migration made feel both stronger and humble. It makes me think that when one is in a different country, one has to constantly find ways to cope with challenges—challenges which are not in one's own comfort zone.

What is negative though is that fighting for solving challenges independently in a new country can make

you quite self-absorbed. Not being in my own country, I lost of course my constant long-life friends and my sense of community.
What do you think the idea of culture includes? How would you describe it? If you had to write a definition about the concept of culture, what would that definition include?
Culture is a word that describes the inherited values, attitudes, and behaviours of a particular society as a whole or a particular social group. It also refers to education and the arts.
Do you experience a sense of belonging/community in the country you migrated to? Does this community which you have now become part of include local people or did you gravitate more towards your 'own' people who lives in your new country?
I have experienced a strong sense of community when I was a student at my Universities. I hardly have experienced a sense of community in my second migratory country - but of course, I still consider myself new to that culture. I definitely gravitate a lot more towards my own people who live in my new country. There is a sense of familiarity and fun to talk to them. I met some Greeks in England and some friends who have some similar interests as I do. It is enjoyable to me to talk to those friends as it helps me to cope with the strangeness and monotony of the everyday life.
IDENTITY **(***e.g., how you would describe yourself.***)**
What in your adopted country shaped you the most in describing yourself as you would at the moment? Why do you think this shaped you in the way it has? What would you describe as the main things you learned about yourself whilst living in this culture different to your own?
I have been a lot more independent than I used to be. I have also been a more goal oriented individual who looks at the pros and cons of choices. I make choices by being more aware of the consequences. At times, I feel that I enjoy more looking at the future than being at the moment, at the present. I am also less of a complainer than other fellow Greeks. I have learnt to concentrate on my tasks and have a perspective on finding the most adaptable solution. I feel that I have been shaped as a more self-contained individual who takes more responsibility of own choices.
What are some of the best memories about the culture you migrated to and do you hold some less preferable memories about this culture? Would you mind telling about a less preferable memory?
The cultures I migrated to gave me the opportunities to reach my own limits and expand my own horizons. My independence and the resources I received helped me to achieve what was not conceivable for me in my own country at that time. I think my less preferable memory during migration has been the sense of alienation and loneliness. It is difficult to start over again in a new culture where you have not grown up in a certain community and you do not really feel belong to a social group. This experience often fades – it is in the background in my life, because I am busy with my work. It is intense when I am less busy.
What did you accomplish in the country you moved to that you think you would not have accomplished in your country of origin?
Do you think there is something that you would like the Authorities (e.g., United Nations, International Office of Migration, Governments) world-wide to know that might help migrants all over the world?
Migrants are people with very strong will and they are sufferers. They work hard because they have a clearer purpose in their lives and do everything to reach their basic goals. They know that migration is not really their choice; they are forced to live in a different country. Migration is not vacation. Migrants are uprooted from comforts and the familiar. They are disadvantaged and can easily feel exploited. They live in a culture where they do not have the choice to pursue their human rights and do not have adequate support from others. In migration, one loses the sense of solidarity and struggle to make ends meet. But,

they also have a lot to offer in a society. They also teach others difference and their own perseverance.
When you left your country of origin, how would you have described yourself at that stage? How would one of the significant people in your life have described you at that time?
Before I left to the US, I used to be quite scared to ride buses on my own. I always wanted to have someone with me if I needed to use the bus. I used to be dependent on others to guide me and lead me. Also, I was a lot more dogmatic about what is true and what is isn't. I am now a lot more independent [person] who has learnt to take responsibility [for my] own actions. I have developed a work ethic and have learnt more about human rights. I am also a lot more tolerant to difference and have learnt to question and analyse closed-ended statements.
How would you describe yourself now that you have migrated? How would one of the significant persons in your life now describe you?
Years have passed by since I started my migration. As mentioned above, I have gained tremendous knowledge and experiences in these processes. But I have also been quite a self-conscious, self-contained and action oriented individual. These qualities are positive in some way and necessary if one wants to achieve personal goals. They are also negative, however. When I visit Greece, I realize that my friends and family are simple, a lot more giving and happier living at the present. They of course complain a lot about their own life and misfortunes but complaining is a cultural habit, anyway. It is a topic of their conversation where it gives them the chance to socialize and be more together. There is a competition going on who needs more support from the other. There is laughter in this competition and there is more togetherness too. In my country, people are loud, sometimes rude, and emotional. They are still dependent on their own friends, family and community. They know comfort and good quality. I still have these qualities but not as much. My independence has shaped me tremendously – it has shaped my opinions, values, social behaviour, and work ethic. Sometimes, it makes me wonder if I have become more selfish - but then I struggle with this idea too. I see others who are more dependent on others and wonder, are they are not selfish too? I haven't resolved that question. At times, I feel surprised when I see the solidarity of certain people in my country. It shakes me, because I know I wouldn't offer it as much as they do. It makes me tearful to see unrecognised, simple, full of gracious acts from simple Greeks who are just happy at the moment and enjoy their moment without worrying constantly about their own day-to-day life and future. They are happy at the moment and enjoy their nature and own community.
Would you like to change anything about those descriptions you mentioned above? Who/what contributed the most to the change in the way you described yourself before you migrated and to your description of yourself now?
I have been a lot more in the process of evaluating my life. I know that something still needs to change in me. I think that I need to find the right community to feel more belonged to in the country I live. I considered volunteering for an organization for a good cause where it will give me the opportunity to meet others alike and feel that I offer something to a disadvantaged. My own family has been my influence – they also see in me that I do not yet experience personal satisfaction despite of my career accomplishments.
Are there times when you would describe yourself differently to the way you described yourself above? When would those times be and what would contribute to the descriptions about yourself that would be relevant at that stage?
Do you think different descriptions of yourself are true for you about yourself at different times in your life/day and when different circumstances prevail?

How would you describe your personal identity or sense of self after your stay in your new country? Would this description be different to how you would have described yourself before you migrated?
... and finally ...
Did we leave anything out that you would have liked to discuss during this 'conversation'? Please tell any other stories which you think are important and representative of the process of migration between countries.
Can you think of any other questions which should have been included in this 'conversation'?

STORY GUIDE
Guiding Questions About Your Experience of Migration

PERSONAL INFORMATION			
Your Name:	**Date:**	**Would you like to use a pseudonym and what should your pseudonym be?**	
Penny Scott	22/11/2012	No	
Your Age:	**Your gender:**		**Where were you born?**
41	Female		Harare, Zimbabwe

Which countries have you lived in since originally leaving your country of birth? How long did you live in each country?

Only in South Africa

MIGRATION

(*A migrant is seen as someone who stays outside of their usual country of residence for at least one year.***)**

How would you describe your overall experience of migration? Could you please tell me a story that would be an illustration of your experience?

Traumatic, as I child I originally viewed this as an adventure but once the holiday was over and we had to settle into schools, home etc it all seemed very foreign and not understanding Afrikaans and living in a Platteland town was difficult as we were treated as foreigners and we were victimised by the Afrikaans children on the bus to school every day.

What <u>pulled</u> you towards migrating (made you consider migration as an option)?

Due to Independence in Zimbabwe after a war in which both my father and brother fought, my parents did not feel we had a future in the country. SA was the logical choice as we had family here.

What <u>pushed</u> you (eventually made you go) to migrate?

The war and subsequent change of government.

Why did you decide on the country you eventually migrated to? Was this country what you expected? How so?

Due to family living in SA my parents felt there would be more support. No – the country was not what I expected. I always had a holiday maker's view and reality was very different. From soft issues like television and food. To language, culture and not having a sense of home and belonging.

What were your hopes and dreams and desires for your migratory experience? Do you think you contributed to the country you migrated to and is your contribution in line with your hopes and dreams and desires about migrating?

Being a child, all I really wanted was to feel accepted and safe. As an adult, this is now home – it took approximately 20 years to get to this point though. I feel I have contributed as I have created employment for over 55 people in my time here. I guess it is in line with my hopes and dreams as I love South Africa and it is now home.

What was going on in your life when you left your country of origin? What were some of the things you preferred for your life and what were some of the things you would have preferred to *not* have been going on in your life before you left?

I was leading a relatively happy carefree childhood in Zim and the only issue was really the war and the threat to my family and my father and brother fighting in the war.

Would you go through the migratory process again? Why/why not? Who encouraged you to go?

I would if I felt I did not have any choice. Leaving a country and even a city where you feel you belong is

very traumatic and it took me a very long time to settle in SA. My parents relocated us.
What did you find difficult and/or easy about the process of migration? What would you do differently if you were to redo the process again?
I would make sure that the country/city/town I relocated to meets the needs of myself and my children from a lifestyle, cultural, social, economic and climatic perspective – not an easy call!
What do you think the pros and cons of migration are in general? Would you encourage others to migrate?
I guess it depends on the individual – some people are more flexible and adapt quicker to change. I would encourage others as long as they did the research and were prepared to look forward as opposed to comparing it with their home country in a negative sense.
What do you think the government of your receiving country should/could do to make it easier for you to be there?
Difficult to say, other than on the work and student front – to make it easier to compete in the workplace on an equal basis and for students to have easier access to student permits and funding. The cultural, social etc aspects are up to the individual.
CULTURE **(***e.g., the ways that people, living in different part of the world, classify and represent their experiences.***)**
When you think about growing up, can you think of one specific cultural tradition (e.g., birthdays) passed on to you by your family? What was the cultural flavour of the house you grew up in? What are some of the earliest memories of these cultural influences you can recall? Can you remember any rituals, celebrations or traditions of your family? What cultural values did your family teach you? Can you tell a story that would represent an illustration of the cultural ethos of your family?
Not really. I would say the culture in our family was very much one of stay inside your family and not really one of socialising outside of this. We spent quite a bit of time with the staff and their children and used to love sitting around a paint tin (used for boiling water) and eating sadza (pap) with our hands.
What cultural influences are still now important to you? How much of a factor in your life has your cultural background been?
I would say if one could call it a culture, then I would say family is still important. My siblings and I are very closely connected.
Can you think of one specific cultural tradition or influence passed on to you by society in your country of origin?
No, more terminologies that only Zimbabweans use.
How did you experience the new culture you moved into? Difficult? Easy? What made it so?
Difficult, the Afrikaans culture in a mining town was very unsophisticated and abrasive
How much of the culture you moved into did you absorb, do you think? Are you OK with what you absorbed? What did you absorb that you would rather now discard? Would you prefer to move away from your adopted culture back to your culture of origin? Why/Why not? What do you still find strange about your new culture? Could you tell a story or tell about an incident that would describe how you interacted with the other culture you now find yourself immersed into?
None. Even when I was an adult people would often ask where I was from as I did not speak like a local and I behaved differently. Now it is not noticeable anymore. I have fitted into the Johannesburg culture and would not know what it feels like to belong anywhere else.
What do you think the idea of culture includes? How would you describe it? If you had to write a definition about the concept of culture, what would that definition include?
I would say it includes attitude, dress, language, food, social activities, national pride, and sport. It gives people a sense of belonging and identification.

Do you experience a sense of belonging/community in the country you migrated to? Does this community which you have now become part of include local people or did you gravitate more towards your 'own' people who lives in your new country?
Yes, I now feel I am more South African than Zimbabwean.
IDENTITY **(***e.g., how you would describe yourself.***)**
What in your adopted country shaped you the most in describing yourself as you would at the moment? Why do you think this shaped you in the way it has? What would you describe as the main things you learned about yourself whilst living in this culture different to your own?
South Africa was always viewed as the land of milk and honey and that you could be whatever you wanted to be. The opportunity was there for the taking. This gave me a sense of hope for creating my own successful life. I learnt that I am incredibly strong and resilient, that nothing is permanent and you create your own happiness and success.
What are some of the best memories about the culture you migrated to and do you hold some less preferable memories about this culture? Would you mind telling about a less preferable memory?
Local culture is sport mad and fantastic how a whole country rallies behind its team. I would say the flip side of this is how fanatical and narrow minded people can be. Witnessing prejudice to other cultures and religions has always been something that I haven't liked. That has shifted now though.
What did you accomplish in the country you moved to that you think you would not have accomplished in your country of origin?
It is difficult to say because one cannot predict how life would have turned out had I not migrated.
Do you think there is something that you would like the Authorities (e.g., United Nations, International Office of Migration, Governments) world-wide to know that might help migrants all over the world?
I think they need to do something about the prejudice against non-nationals.
When you left your country of origin, how would you have described yourself at that stage? How would one of the significant people in your life have described you at that time?
I was very young, naive and introverted.
How would you describe yourself now that you have migrated? How would one of the significant persons in your life now describe you?
Strong and capable. Survivor mentality – do what needs to be done.
Would you like to change anything about those descriptions you mentioned above? Who/what contributed the most to the change in the way you described yourself before you migrated and to your description of yourself now?
No, life turns out the way it is meant to and it is for you to grow from those lessons. Circumstances are responsible for the changes.
Are there times when you would describe yourself differently to the way you described yourself above? When would those times be and what would contribute to the descriptions about yourself that would be relevant at that stage?
Yes, at night when I reflect on how I feel and often I don't feel as strong and capable as I project to the world.
Do you think different descriptions of yourself are true for you about yourself at different times in your life/day and when different circumstances prevail?
Yes.
How would you describe your personal identity or sense of self after your stay in your new country? Would this description be different to how you would have described yourself before you migrated?
Difficult to say as I was a child so naturally there would have been a big change when growing into

adulthood. I can't say if it was migrating or just natural growth.
… and finally ...
Did we leave anything out that you would have liked to discuss during this 'conversation'? Please tell any other stories which you think are important and representative of the process of migration between countries.
No.
Can you think of any other questions which should have been included in this 'conversation'?
No.

STORY GUIDE
Guiding Questions About Your Experience of Migration

PERSONAL INFORMATION			
Your Name:	**Date:**	**Would you like to use a pseudonym and what should your pseudonym be?**	
Phenyo Molefe	2011-11-30	N/A	
Your Age:	**Your gender:**		**Where were you born?**
28	Male		South Africa

Which countries have you lived in since originally leaving your country of birth? How long did you live in each country?

United Kingdom, 8 years.

MIGRATION

(*A migrant is seen as someone who stays outside of their usual country of residence for at least one year.***)**

How would you describe your overall experience of migration? Could you please tell me a story that would be an illustration of your experience?

I would say positive. It has been the single most important thing in my life, given me the perspective that I have and share today. I got to meet a range of people who I credit with playing a major role in shaping my thinking of life and the dynamics there within.

What <u>pulled</u> you towards migrating (made you consider migration as an option)?

A desire to learn and grow in my interactions with others from a varied background.

What <u>pushed</u> you (eventually made you go) to migrate?

My studies.

Why did you decide on the country you eventually migrated to? Was this country what you expected? How so?

It was the country I had originally had in mind. I had previously written off a study option to the US owing to my goal to pursue Actuarial Science. The UK was everything I expected and more The initial few months were by no means easy but one learns and adapts. The varied people, varied perspectives and a city that was not so preoccupied with race as what South Africa and is still is to a great extent.

What were your hopes and dreams and desires for your migratory experience? Do you think you contributed to the country you migrated to and is your contribution in line with your hopes and dreams and desires about migrating?

My primary reason for travelling through to the UK was to further my studies in actuarial science and gain international experience in the area of my pursuit. My secondary reasons did not influence my decision to continue with my pursuit but it did enhance what I perceived would be a favourable phase in my life. At the time in my life I really felt the need to get away from that which was around me, I felt constrained by thinking and surrounding which I had known as my own and needed the time and space to find my journey a clearer understanding of life and the dynamics she shared. Although there was some turbulence in my setting in South Africa, it was minor compared to the frustration I felt being here. My being was rather apart from all else around me; the status quo did not draw sufficient parallels with me and what I sought from this life. I did not make celebrated contributions in my first tenure in the UK, however I would like to think that in some way I contributed the country. In my capacity and the roles I fulfilled in work and my interaction with friends and people unknown to me, I exceeded the initially planned contributions. I am still at an early phase in my career, perhaps in a later

phase I will have designed solutions which will have noted potential to contribute to the UK.
What was going on in your life when you left your country of origin? What were some of the things you preferred for your life and what were some of the things you would have preferred to *not* have been going on in your life before you left?
See above. I cannot say that there were notable things happening in my life at the time. I was struggling to [get] a scholarship I had been awarded owing to some maladministration at the University of Pretoria, something that only got sorted out some six years after I left South Africa. However that alone was not my driving reason for leaving or pursing opportunities elsewhere.
Would you go through the migratory process again? Why/why not? Who encouraged you to go?
I need this to be more specific so as to ascertain which part of the process you are referring to.
What did you find difficult and/or easy about the process of migration? What would you do differently if you were to redo the process again?
I think the most pressing aspect of the migration process, is the admin[istration] that comes along with it. There is nothing specific that which I would do differently.
What do you think the pros and cons of migration are in general? Would you encourage others to migrate?
Yes, however every individual's circumstances are different but in looking at what it has done for me and the experiences it unveiled yes, I would very much encourage people to travel.
What do you think the government of your receiving country should/could do to make it easier for you to be there?
I think the government was very accommodating as too were the people, especially the people who proved themselves superb hosts. However I feel that the erratic immigration legislation made little sense at the best of time and became even harder to navigate as every party wanted to look like it was actively decreasing the level of immigration.
CULTURE **(***e.g., the ways that people, living in different part of the world, classify and represent their experiences.***)**
When you think about growing up, can you think of one specific cultural tradition (e.g., birthdays) passed on to you by your family? What was the cultural flavour of the house you grew up in? What are some of the earliest memories of these cultural influences you can recall? Can you remember any rituals, celebrations or traditions of your family? What cultural values did your family teach you? Can you tell a story that would represent an illustration of the cultural ethos of your family?
It is rather challenging to think of specific cultural tradition which has been passed to me; that which I have learned from my parents extends beyond the constraints of culture. I think the one aspect not only unique to us but is one of the most important things I have embraced is the sense of community which exists where I grew up. Even now upon my return - having spent so many years away - returning to Temba is like returning to extended family. Irrespective of how big Temba is , all generally seem to know each other. I missed that and carry a part that were I go and with those I interact with. However to say that my parents paid strict observations to their cultural upbringing would be a diversion from truth. They were very open and embrace whatever was good irrespective of its origins.
What cultural influences are still now important to you? How much of a factor in your life has your cultural background been?
That pertaining to the sense of community, the manner in which we take care of our old during their final years and general level of respect. I am an open book, a lot of the above will remain forever but I have married myself to other cultural influences which I welcome with open arms.

Can you think of one specific cultural tradition or influence passed on to you by society in your country of origin?
Please see the above.
How did you experience the new culture you moved into? Difficult? Easy? What made it so?
It was not merely isolated to a single culture. London is still British but has to a minor degree adopted aspects of various cultures as its own. However I embraced English culture with ease and it was not foreign to me. Owing to various factors but especially that of an integrated world our cultures are very integrated.
How much of the culture you moved into did you absorb, do you think? Are you OK with what you absorbed? What did you absorb that you would rather now discard? Would you prefer to move away from your adopted culture back to your culture of origin? Why/Why not? What do you still find strange about your new culture? Could you tell a story or tell about an incident that would describe how you interacted with the other culture you now find yourself immersed into?
It would be very difficult to quantify how much of the British culture I adopted during my time there or that was already a part of me via the tutelage of my parents. There is nothing I gained during my time in the UK that I would rather discard. I think for people who have been exposed to various cultures from an earlier age, the ability and willingness to adapt and learn from others may be 'easier'. As mentioned above, the being I am today is indirectly related to the travels and textured landscape that has become my own.
What do you think the idea of culture includes? How would you describe it? If you had to write a definition about the concept of culture, what would that definition include?
A set of shared beliefs, attitudes, values, aspirations that categorises a unique group or people.
Do you experience a sense of belonging/community in the country you migrated to? Does this community which you have now become part of include local people or did you gravitate more towards your 'own' people who lives in your new country?
I think living in a city like London is very different to living in Oxford not only because the population are more homogenous in Oxford but its culture is different to that which you may experience in London. Yet both are still largely English.
IDENTITY **(***e.g., how you would describe yourself.***)**
What in your adopted country shaped you the most in describing yourself as you would at the moment? Why do you think this shaped you in the way it has? What would you describe as the main things you learned about yourself whilst living in this culture different to your own?
My ability and willingness to be more open-minded. When you are living in such a city as richly diverse as London is, you are challenged to explore beyond some of the truths you have always subscribed to. It shaped my perception because it evidenced some sources of ignorance in my being which I had initially thought I was void of. Be welcoming and open to all before rushing to judge, more so in practice than merely theoretical disposition.
What are some of the best memories about the culture you migrated to and do you hold some less preferable memories about this culture? Would you mind telling about a less preferable memory?
The rich textured souls I call my friends, they form my fondest memories. Less favourable were some of the lonely nights and days I spent as I travelled a path of enlightenment if that is what it may be called. London is a beautiful city but there come seasons when it can be immensely lonely but perhaps that is a reflection of the questions I was seeking answers to but struggled to find.

What did you accomplish in the country you moved to that you think you would not have accomplished in your country of origin?
I found myself, refined my purpose on this earth and I think the environment was set in such a manner that it allowed me to mature to the concerned levels in the steps of maturity. I expanded my wealth of experience and perception that awakened another world which may very much have been alien to me.
Do you think there is something that you would like the Authorities (e.g., United Nations, International Office of Migration, Governments) world-wide to know that might help migrants all over the world?
N/A. I am a proponent of free migration but it is simply not practical and thus I would like the powers that be to exercise my practicality to the "laws" they establish.
When you left your country of origin, how would you have described yourself at that stage? How would one of the significant people in your life have described you at that time?
Self: Immensely talented but undergoing a sea of torrents in the pursuit of self-awareness and understanding. Other : Kind, talented, driven; can sometime be somewhat isolated.
How would you describe yourself now that you have migrated? How would one of the significant persons in your life now describe you?
Self: Talented, passionate, evolved sense of awareness. Other: Talented, driven, sympathetic, open minded.
Would you like to change anything about those descriptions you mentioned above? Who/what contributed the most to the change in the way you described yourself before you migrated and to your description of yourself now?
Many aspects of my personal evolution, the death of my friend Mpho, the pursuit of understanding life and her dynamics. The book with the most prolific impact on my life: *Seat of the Soul*.
Are there times when you would describe yourself differently to the way you described yourself above? When would those times be and what would contribute to the descriptions about yourself that would be relevant at that stage?
Yes. Perhaps there will be times when other aspects may be more fitting to that above description however it does not mean that the above strays from the truth. However it is more reflective of the fact that in different seasons some aspects of my being may be more evident. I am a deeply reflective being and at times struggle to articulate the measure of my perception with those around me in ways that can be understood and appreciated. This occasionally does arouse some level of frustration or sense of loneliness but as I grow this is no longer a factor. I am no longer looking to be understood by all as I once was.
Do you think different descriptions of yourself are true for you about yourself at different times in your life/day and when different circumstances prevail?
See above.
How would you describe your personal identity or sense of self after your stay in your new country? Would this description be different to how you would have described yourself before you migrated?
Yes, 8 years passed and a lot of seasons in my life and of course you evolve as a spirit. I changed, my life changed. At the core I am still the same person but perhaps at better peace with myself and my pursuit in this life.
… and finally ...
Did we leave anything out that you would have liked to discuss during this 'conversation'? Please tell any other stories which you think are important and representative of the process of migration between countries.
n/a.
Can you think of any other questions which should have been included in this 'conversation'?
n/a.

INTERVIEW WITH JESSE

Jesse is a 22-year old young man who was born in the Congo, but who has lived in Rwanda, Burundi and Uganda. He came to the USA as an asylum seeker along with his nuclear family

MARGOT: Do you think migration had an effect on how it is that we view the world and how it is that we view ourselves?
JESSE: That is a good question. I think it does.
MARGOT: How would you describe your overall experience of migration?
JESSE: My experience, there is a lot of good things, like you said, and a lot of bad things. The positive thing is that, the best thing I learned from it, I learned how to talk to different people. And, I am comfortable being some place that I have no idea where or who anyone is. Over time I learned that. At first, it was bad because you go places in the first couple of months; it's horrible because you don't fit in, you don't speak the language. So for a long time I was like, I would turn into a loner, because then you feel comfortable with the people that were around there, the people I lived with, the people I went to school with. I never connected with them at first. So that was really bad, because then you become more self-vulnerable I guess to your things. You start believing what people say because you are different. I really didn't make it at first, because my parents always moved around. So, it's hard for me to stay in contact with people that are close to me; because once I move away, that is it. For me as this black kid, these are my new friends, and when I'm gone, its game over. So that is the bad part.
MARGOT: So are there still some people that you would like to be connected to that you've left in other places where you've lived?
JESSE: Yes definitely. There are a lot of people, like my childhood friends. I would love to connect with them and still be friends. But over time and different cultures, like I feel like we are so different sometimes and it is hard to connect with them. It wouldn't be the same anymore.
MARGOT: What was it that pulled you towards migrating? You said that your parents moved around a lot. Well, obviously then you go with them because you are a child. So, tell me about the other parts when *you* decided to go to different places. What pulled you to go to these different places?
JESSE: A lot of times it was just circumstances in the country with war and stuff like that. So, they moved around jobs, and my parents, different things that they probably don't want me to talk about. But, when I decided I wasn't going to do it anymore. That is probably when I finished high school and I was like whether I wanted to go to college, or whether I wanted to go far away, or do I want to stay in the same spot. To stay close to people I grew up with for once and just have a home. Some place I can call home. So, I think that is when I decided just to stay for a little while. Just to try it out. That is in New Hampshire.
MARGOT: How long have you actually been in the USA?
JESSE: Since 2001.
MARGOT: So that is about eleven years now.
JESSE: Yes.
MARGOT: And before that, did you move around a lot in the U.S.A as well?
JESSE: Just town to town, as my parents tried to find jobs and all this other stuff.
MARGOT: So did your parents come to the U.S.A as refugees?
JESSE: No, we kind of came here almost as refugees, but political asylum.
Margot: So you came as an asylum seeker?
JESSE: Yes.

MARGOT: Were you treated well when you came to the USA?
JESSE: No, not at all, because it was different. The place where we moved to was up north in New Hampshire, and people there are very racist, and they are not used to someone who is different from them.
MARGOT: And what helped your family decide to come to the USA? You could have gone to Canada, or to England.
JESSE: I have no idea why they chose the USA. It is probably because in Africa everyone thinks America is so amazing. It was hard work. Nonstop hard work. It's not easy. My parents are still here. They live in New Hampshire still. They are settled and pretty happy. There is more safety here.
MARGOT: If we think about what pulled us, there's also this concept about what pushed us to go. What is it that pushed you guys? Is it the asylum-seeking that you needed to get to get to a place of safety?
JESSE: We need to know that we are safe.
MARGOT: You were in Uganda at that stage?
JESSE: I went to Uganda. My parents were still in Rwanda trying to work things out.
MARGOT: So when they decided to come, you decided to come with them?
JESSE: Yes, I was either [going with them] or going to go to South Africa.
MARGOT: Okay and you decided to come here?
JESSE: Yes.
MARGOT: Why did you decide on the country you eventually migrated too?
JESSE: The opportunity came for us. We found a church that helped us get here, and we stayed with them too. I think that played a big role.
MARGOT: Was the USA what you expected?
JESSE: No. The life we had to live here was thirty times worse than the one we had to live in Africa.
MARGOT: In which ways?
JESSE: We had to live in homeless shelters. Life was a struggle for the last ten years or seven years.
MARGOT: The church group, when they helped you come over, did they abandon you after that?
JESSE: No, they helped us for a few months. For almost a year actually, because then we got paper work. That is when we moved into the homeless shelter. We stayed there for a little while until we could afford to get an apartment after another year.
MARGOT: Your experience with the homeless shelter, what was that like?
JESSE: It wasn't good. People who lived around us there were still backwards, negative people. It was a learning experience.
MARGOT: When you decided that you were coming to America, what were your hopes and your dreams and your desires for coming to America?
JESSE: I don't know. I was just so excited, because I pictured what I saw on TV, a huge house, and everyone was happy. Such an opportunity to get a good job, make a lot of money. Take care of your family, and not to be worried about government coming in and taking everything and killing you. So, that was definitely the thing I looked forward too.
MARGOT: I hear this thing of safety again, of personal safety and family safety. Would that be part of the hopes and dreams and desires?
JESSE: Definitely that was a big part of it, so we could be together and have no fear of anything.
MARGOT: So it is mom and dad and you and your sister?
JESSE: And then they adopted another child here. And then we have two other kids. My mother adopted two foster kids.

MARGOT: So I am speaking to someone that has a heart bigger than the USA. Your heart is just for everybody out there.
JESSE: Yes. That is how I grew up. My parents loved helping people. My dad ran an orphanage. Then my mom did a lot of work with some programmes over there in Rwanda, and all the countries we lived in. My dad has a non-profit organization here. He works with all the refugees in New Hampshire.
MARGOT: Do you think that what it is that you and your family are contributing to the country, is in line with the hopes and dreams that you had when you decided to come to the USA?
JESSE: A lot of it was part of the disappointments that we got when we came here, and the fact that a lot of people come here and the government doesn't help them. They just throw them in houses where there are roaches and mice everywhere. They don't help you get education, and to find a job and all those sorts of stuff. So my parents started this non-profit in order to help those people who are going to be coming, those people who are here.
MARGOT: Jesse, are you describing to me how your family where people who came to the USA as asylum seekers - people who could be described as people who needed help, safety, refuge, and caring for. Your family did not get these things here in the USA, so they turned that around into something where they were doing the helping, the looking after, and the caring for others in a similar situation.
JESSE: Yes. That describes what my parents love to do.
MARGOT: And where do you fit into that picture?
JESSE: For me right now, it is just finding my own identity and helping others that are struggling like we have struggled. I love working at the food pantry (feeding scheme/soup kitchen) and the shelter where they go. I just love helping those people. Not necessarily giving them money, because I don't have money myself. It's just being there with them and showing them some love, because I know how it is to not have that.
MARGOT: What was going on in your life when you left Uganda to come here?
JESSE: There were a lot of worries about my parents, because I didn't know the situation that they were in. We lived with a few other kids, my cousins, not all of them were my cousins, but their parents were going through the same situation. We both didn't know how it was going to turn out.
MARGOT: So there were some things that were okay for you there and some things that weren't okay for you there where you were. What were some of the things that weren't okay for you, if you don't mind talking about them?
JESSE: I can't talk about most of it, but the one I can talk about is that just not knowing if my parents were going to be okay, and if we were ever going to see them and stuff like that. That was the hard part. But, for being okay, we knew we were relatively safe. In some situations, people would just drive by on motorcycles and we were like, okay, this is our time to die.
MARGOT: So it is the insecurity of your personal safety, whether you were still going to be alive tomorrow to tell the story of your life?
JESSE: Yes.
MARGOT: Would you go from country to country again?
JESSE: Yes. Because, it is a rich experience with meeting people that are struggling who are so different from you, and [have] different lifestyles.. You see happiness with people that you would not expect to have that joy and happiness. I noticed that. I really want to do that next semester if I can. There is a programme that goes around. That is what I am hoping to do. So hopefully that will be a rich experience.

MARGOT: Who encouraged you to do this thing that you are doing to go from place to place? Is it just something that you know you want to do or is there someone, or somebody or something that is saying to you "Jesse, go for it?" Who is encouraging you to do this?
JESSE: The only thing is probably my faith, I guess. I love being with people.
MARGOT: Tell me about your faith.
JESSE: My faith pushes me to be in an uncomfortable place in order to make a connection with other people.
MARGOT: So you would describe yourself as someone that is close to your religious beliefs?
JESSE: Yes.
MARGOT: What did you find easy or difficult about the migration process? What would you do differently this time if you had to do it again? Is there anything that you would redo?
JESSE: Definitely school. Education-wise I would definitely change everything up. The system here is not meant to help people who are coming from a different place, who don't speak the same language. They just push you backwards, and they just move you forward without teaching you. That's when they go through the system and the process without learning anything for a long time. I was in there, and I would definitely, if I could go back, I would stand up against that.
MARGOT: Am I right assuming that you came to the USA and learned English here? You didn't know English when you got here?
JESSE: Yes.
MARGOT: And now you are a senior at university.
JESSE: Yes.
MARGOT: What do you think that says about you? Do you think it might speak about perseverance and about personal integrity?
JESSE: A little bit, I guess it does. It is hard for me to say that stuff about myself, because personally that is how I've always been.
MARGOT: When I hear you speaking to me, what is it that you think I hear?
JESSE: A story I guess.
MARGOT: A story about what?
JESSE: My life.
MARGOT: And what does your story of your life tell me? What is it that I'm hearing about this person that is sitting opposite me?
JESSE: How my life is a bunch of bad luck.
MARGOT: Do you think I might also be hearing that there is an exceptional young man whom is sitting across from me that could've made one of two choices? Either to go the down and out-way, but rather chose the up and up-way. Do you think that that might be part of the story that I'm hearing?
JESSE: Yes.
MARGOT: What do you think are the pros and cons of migration in general?
JESSE: Pros, definitely a different perspective. The cons will just be the loneliness, or feeling that you are not like everyone else.
MARGOT: A sense of " I'm different."
JESSE: Yes.
MARGOT: And, there is this discourse in the world that if "I'm different, I'm bad."
JESSE: Exactly.
MARGOT: Would you encourage others to migrate?
JESSE: A 100%.

MARGOT: For the same reasons, or for extra reasons?
JESSE: Definitely for the same reason. Because I see a lot of students who are foreign students, they come here and they don't migrate out of their bubble. They spend four years here not speaking with someone [who is not] the same as them. I hate it more than anything.
MARGOT: What do you think the government in the USA could have or should have done to make it easier for you to be here?
JESSE: Definitely if there were more programmes to teach you - like know yourself programmes, and actually stay with the students and help them learn, and tell them that they can do it. Push them to become better, because lot of them - if they have that person to stay behind with - they like to stay in that programme.
MARGOT: Which of the cultures you have been part of would you describe as your originating culture? As a young person you had lived in many countries. You were born in the Congo, but would you see the Congo as your country of origin or rather some other country?
JESSE: Mine will definitely be Rwanda.
MARGOT: How long did you live in Rwanda?
JESSE: Probably six years. For a year and two years I was in Burundi and Uganda.
MARGOT: When you think about growing up, can you think of one specific cultural tradition that you followed in your family?
JESSE: Just celebrations in general, and how we, when we are together, everybody invites strangers. If you don't know them, they just come. We just eat together, and dance together. We are just a big family. Everything is a family-thing.
MARGOT: Would it be an open celebration, and if strangers wanted to come they could come?
JESSE: Yes.
MARGOT: Would it be that everybody contributed to the celebration in terms of bringing food or making music?
JESSE: No, the hostess usually is in charge of that. They provide food. For example if I say let's go to dinner tomorrow night, I will provide, no expectations. If you come to my house, even if there are sixty people, I provide the food. You don't bring anything.
MARGOT: If you didn't know how many strangers were coming along, how would you know how to provide?
JESSE: You just share what you have. You just break an egg and give it to someone else. If there are some leftovers in your plate, you just give it to someone. You just share.
MARGOT: What was the cultural flavour of the house that you grew up in?
JESSE: Like I said before, it is an open thing. There are always people staying in my house. Even in America there are always people always there, an open house. I never stayed in my room more than a year, because there is always someone in my room staying there.
MARGOT: What was some of your earliest memories of these cultural influences that you can recall? Maybe you can tell me about a story or something that you can recall about earliest memories.
JESSE: When I was two or three years old, my parents had a house we lived in, and there was another little apartment, or duplex next door and my family took in my uncle and his whole family to live there. There were always people.
MARGOT: Can you remember any rituals, or celebrations, or traditions of your family?
JESSE: One thing that we just always do together is going to church. It was definitely, wake up Sunday, go to church, come back and eat dinner, eat lunch.

MARGOT: What cultural values did your family teach you?
JESSE: To respect everyone, and always have your family's, back no matter what they need. Even if I can't provide, find a way to provide for your family. Always be open and willing to help people.
MARGOT: Can you tell me a story of when it happened in your family?
JESSE: [The time when] my friend couldn't find a place to stay, and I just thought automatically in my head, "You obviously can stay in my room, even if then I'll stay on the couch, because that's how I grew up." Another thing my parents always taught me was to treat everyone the same, because you know those house-people - the house-cleaners, the house-boys and house-girls - they are treated like slaves in Africa. My mom hated that. For a long time she wanted to start a programme for them, because they basically are slaves. One thing she always did was, for a long time, she made them eat dinner with us the table, because you know, they always eat outside. She would force them to eat there, but they never wanted to do it, so she made us start eating with them, so she didn't want to upset that structure. So my entire life in Africa I always had to eat with them. So, it didn't seem that I was better than them. They always taught me to humble myself to be equal to everyone.
MARGOT: What cultural influences are important to you even now?
JESSE: To be open to everyone, because here people are very closed-minded if you ask them "How are you doing?", they just say: "Oh, good." But, I'm willing to talk about anything; I don't care, because here guys are instructed so that they can't show emotions, and to show emotions is a weakness. That's definitely what they can learn. That I can pick up.
MARGOT: How much of a factor has your cultural influences been in your life? Is it something that you think you could just wipe off the table, or is it something that is here with you?
JESSE: I think it's something that's with me, but I don't know, if I didn't grow up with my parents, or I didn't see them as much as I did the past couple of years, I could've wiped them off. I chose not to.
MARGOT: Can you think of one specific cultural tradition outside of your house that was passed to you by the society in your country of origin?
JESSE: No, because a lot of cultural traditions that we do have in my country are set up reasons for the genocide, so my parents told me not to hold those same traditions and cultural values that other families held. They believed that they are better than the other people; there are people who are worse than them. They will definitely tell me not to hold those things.
MARGOT: So one of the influences that you learned was not to support genocide?
JESSE: Not to judge, or say that we are the victims because they did us wrong But we probably did something, or we did do something before that to cause that to happen. I guess everyone has their own truth which is true.
MARGOT: So you are speaking to me about coming from a position of surviving rather than victimhood.
JESSE: Definitely. We got blessed because we left the Congo when the war was about to come there. We went into Rwanda right after the end of the Rwanda war. It was bad then, but it wasn't as bad. But in our family, about 99% of them died -about 90 something people were killed. But, we survived, so I definitely feel grateful.
MARGOT: You feel grateful, but you still feel grief?
JESSE: I feel grief yes.
MARGOT: Because, it is not an easy thing to know that that happened to your family?
JESSE: Definitely, especially when you see them grieving around. Everyone else lost somebody, everybody else died, but my immediate family survived. I held that grudge. Like, why did we survive and everyone else died? For a long time I always wondered why I was feeling guilty. Sometimes I resented my parents for being alive.

MARGOT: Do you think that your age had anything to do with being able to adapt to the USA? Do you think it would've been harder for you if you were fifty years old?
JESSE: Definitely it would have been harder, because you are not around as many people, so like at school I'm around people that I had to speak English, and I always have to. It was kind of harder for my parents because they didn't pick the language up as fast, because they were not around that many, so it is definitely difficult.
MARGOT: And their accents, would that be more of the African continent accent of is it more like USA accent?
JESSE: They have a strong accent.
MARGOT: How much of the USA-culture do you think you've absorbed?
JESSE: I think I absorbed a lot. The things that I like, their music, and their sports, the fashion and the stuff like that. I definitely absorbed more of that American… I'm okay with that. It doesn't bother me.
MARGOT: Are there things from back home that you miss?
JESSE: Definitely the connections I had with people there, when I lived there, because it is not the same here.
MARGOT: Would you want to go back there?
JESSE: One day, yes.
MARGOT: To live or to visit?
JESSE: I want to go back to visit. To live there, probably when I'm like 80 or something. I will probably go and retire there.
MARGOT: Having come here as an asylum seeker, would it be possible for you to go back? Or would there be some political implication if you went back?
JESSE: There would be, so I have to wait until I'm a citizen before…
MARGOT: And how long is that going to still take?
JESSE: Hopefully in the next year or two. It's expensive, especially if you don't come as a refugee. You know how it is, it's ridiculous. So all of the expenses always come up and I always push it back. It's that I can't just vote, so that's the only thing, but I'm not really worried about that.
MARGOT: What do you still find strange about the USA?
JESSE: The values. There are a lot of people that is just me, me, me, and me. I feel that is kind of weird. I'm not used to that. Everybody does everything just in order to satisfy whatever needs they have.
MARGOT: If I had to ask you to please tell me what you think this concept of culture included, what would you include in this word culture? What do you think defines culture? What is culture?
JESSE: Culture for me definitely would be something that I value. Something that I can't change about myself that you may try to change, but deep inside it's the same. You might cover it up with an American accent, but deep inside it's still there. It's who you are.
MARGOT: That 'who I am' that you speak of, would that be about food, would it be about music, would it be about the people that you know? What would it be about?
JESSE: That would be about food. Food is a big thing. Dancing, we love to dance. They love drinking in our country. Drinking is definitely in our culture, which is a sad horrible thing.
MARGOT: Is that a response to things that have happened there, or is that just something that has evolved through the ages?
JESSE: I think it is something that evolved through the ages. I don't know. People just take great value if you can drink, and the person that can drink the most, you need to drink all the time. I don't know. It's weird.

MARGOT: Do you experience a sense of belonging here in this country?
JESSE: Sometimes I do, but sometimes I feel different. It will also be the same thing if I go back, because I've been away from there for so long, that I'll just feel like okay I don't fit here, I don't fit here. I'm afraid that I will not adapt.
MARGOT: What do you think shaped you in the USA the most to help you describe yourself as you would describe yourself at this moment?
JESSE: I guess that the times in my life where I didn't fit in, I was just by myself; that definitely shaped me to who I am and being comfortable with myself.
MARGOT: Why do you think it shaped you in this way?
JESSE: I had to learn how to be comfortable with myself, and accept the things that made me different, and take value to it, because at first I hated it. I hated it a lot. One day I was just like, forget this, this is who I am, I guess.
MARGOT: What was some of the main things that you learned about yourself in living in this culture?
JESSE: I don't know. I just don't value myself highly. People here, they try to do things in order to value themselves for people to value them. That is just not me.
MARGOT: When you say you are not valuing yourself highly enough, is that because that has to do with how you grew up culturally, or is that because of how it is that you were oppressed when you initially came here, or a combination of the two or something else?
JESSE: It will probably be a combination of the two, because like you know, being a migrant child always moving around, you are always going to be different than other people. You start not liking yourself. Moving here made it worst, because I realized it more, because there is a broader region, and I was definitely different than everyone else. In my country, the way they discriminate. I was darker than all my family members, so sometimes I fit in, but like, because they still had that hatred of the other side, and they go "Oh they are dark", they suddenly make it sound like something bad. And then in myself I'm like "Okay I'm dark too, so what is the problem here?"
MARGOT: What are some of the best memories about the culture you migrated to?
JESSE: This year when we finally got a house. My family was definitely able to buy a house, and that was a long time coming. That was good, and that ideal, the American hard work and opportunities. In Africa someone could be working his ass off for his whole life and never make it that far. Here you know like, there's a change you can make it.
MARGOT: What did you accomplish here that you would not have accomplished back home?
JESSE: To find your own identity. You learned how to care about yourself more, and to like, value yourself to be different than everyone else.
MARGOT: Would you have been able to be at a university the way that you are here, back in Rwanda, or the Congo, or Burundi, Uganda or any one of those places you lived?
JESSE: Probably not, I don't think I would have, school is not really my thing. I always moved around a lot, and I just never valued school, because I was worse than everyone else, because every time I have to move, I had to learn a language over again. I just did not like school, because I thought I was never going to be good enough.
MARGOT: Broadly, I'm talking about the United Nations, I'm talking about every government that there could be in the world. Do you think that there is something that you could add to their knowledge about what it is that they could do to make it better, easier for migrants? What do you think they could do that might help migrants all over the world?
JESSE: The best thing, definitely to do, would be to go see how they are living, and see their lifestyle, and ask them and talk to them like, "Do you feel like you're learning in school?" and "What could you get out of this?" Because, my friends were like, "Oh I want to help the homeless, but I don't know how

to do it," and I'm like "If you don't know how to do it, why don't you just come with me. It is as easy as that. If you go there and see it, you are going to know what to do."

MARGOT: So what you are saying is that you think that someone should have had this conversation that you and I are having, within the first month or two of you arriving here? So that you could know how to go about things, and you could feel settled, and they could know what it was that you needed.

JESSE: Yes. The governor's wife came here, and she was talking about the obesity problem. She was like, if everyone can walk an hour every day, maybe they would definitely be healthier and skinnier. I was like, a lot of people can't, because they work 16 hours a day, and they don't have time to just like take their lunch break for an hour. A lot of people don't get that, they get 15 minutes, and you got to eat, and you are not going to eat and walk. So I feel like sometimes I have to work so much harder than my friends. And, when it comes to health and eating and going to the gym, like it is the last thing on my mind. I just come home, and I'm just exhausted, because I wake up at 04:00 or something, go to work, and then I have class all day, and then I have work again, and then I come home, and it's late. I don't want to think about the gym, I just want to eat something and just go to bed and do it again.

MARGOT: What work is it that you are doing at the moment?

JESSE: Right now I work at the gym in the morning. Then I also supervise the sports. And then I referee basketball on the weekends.

MARGOT: You could have chosen to be the one on the outside, but that is the choice that you didn't make.

JESSE: Yes.

MARGOT: When you left your country of origin, how would you have described yourself at that stage?

JESSE: I was ecstatic. I was so happy to get out. I was like "Oh, I'm going to America." It is going to be amazing. Everything is going to be better from now on. Wrong.

MARGOT: Let's say that I spoke to someone in the country that you were living in before you came to America, what do you think they would've told me about Jesse?

JESSE: Quiet kid that doesn't like to talk.

MARGOT: If I went to your dad now, and I knocked on his door, and I said "Good afternoon Mister Jesse's Father. Please tell me about your son Jesse?", how do you think he would describe you?

JESSE: My dad, I don't know what he will say. But, my mom, that would be like "He is more outgoing now and he likes to have fun." I push myself too far sometimes. I like meeting many people, and just connect with people. That is so different from me when I was younger.

MARGOT: So you have migrated from being a lonelier kind of person to being a more interactional kind of person? A relationship-orientated kind of person?

JESSE: Not necessarily, because I felt sometimes I might have a lot of friends, but I still have my own little bubble. I don't know. It is kind of hard.

MARGOT: Is that a way which you don't prefer for yourself? Because, maybe it's all right for us to have our own space. Or is that something that is difficult for you to go back into your own bubble and then have to come out again?

JESSE: It is just how/what I do. I open it up to people, but I don't like opening up myself like being this side (Jesse refers to being on the 'being interviewed'-side). I'm always on your side. This is difficult for me, really difficult, because I'm a 100% on the other side, and never really ever on this side.

MARGOT: Do you think that the way that you described yourself to me is more true or less true at different times of the day, or at different times in your life?

JESSE: At some different time, I was different before, I guess. I got to be comfortable in myself. But, now I feel this is true all the time, because I don't only care when I'm around…

MARGOT: You are who you are, and it's okay for you?
JESSE: Yes. It could be the president, it could be my friend, it could be a little kid, and it could be a homeless guy.
MARGOT: If I said to you, Jesse, please will you give me a definition of your sense of identity as you are sitting here, what is it that you would say to me?
JESSE: My identity right now will definitely be to be like Jesus. It's the one thing I've cherished for the past year and a half.
MARGOT: How would you describe that?
JESSE: Everything I want to do, I just want to do it for the greater good of others, and being selfless. Work and stuff like that sometimes makes me mad, and I try not to take it personally. I'm just trying to remember who I am now; non-condemnation, because like I said, it is not my job to condemn. A lot of people get that mixed up with religion when they say it in our class; they're always saying it in a bubble that religion is this.
MARGOT: My sense is that religion is about love and compassion.
JESSE: Yes. Religion is your own personal identity to people, I think. Everybody has their own religion.
MARGOT: Even if your religion is to not have a religion, that's still your religion.
JESSE: Exactly, it's still a religion. There are sayings that you cannot have your own personal religion, but I think you can. The cultural difference would be, here they value people more outspoken and people who like to speak about them. For me it is not like that. It is so hard for me to be in class, and like know that my grade depends on me, and they are just always talking and that is something impossible for me to do. I don't know, because here they respect people who do it all like that. And, in different cultures like Africa and like Asia they respect people who are quieter, because it is more of a sign of strength, and here it is a sign of weakness. And, I am trying to break that line. I've been trying to be more outspoken like in class, but it just seems impossible. I could never be like just always having something to say, because I always feel that I should let someone else talk.
MARGOT: Are you okay with that, though? With being the one that is the more observing one, the more silent one?
JESSE: Yes, I love it. I don't want to change it, but I always feel like there are different places that you need to be more outspoken if you want to be an activist about a certain thing. You got to learn how to say no to someone.
MARGOT: What was your experience of us talking together?
JESSE: I think it was good because I learned a lot of things about myself, and the reason why I feel a certain way about some of the stuff, because I'm not used to just talking about myself. It was helpful that you talked about your experience, because you clarified most of the questions.
MARGOT: That didn't guide you in a certain way when you should've, would've wanted to answer in a different way?
JESSE: No.
MARGOT: Thank you, Jesse, for talking with me about the things that matter to you. If you think of anything else, please will you email me or let me know when we see each other?

STORY GUIDE
Guiding Questions About Your Experience of Migration

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Your Name:	**Date:**	**Would you like to use a pseudonym and what should your pseudonym be?**
Kate Lindley Scheidegger	16.02.2012	Kate

Your Age:	**Your gender:**	**Where were you born?**
54 and ¾	Female	England

Which countries have you lived in since originally leaving your country of birth? How long did you live in each country?

USA for 18 months from August 1965 – February 1967
Switzerland since February 1967 (45 years!!)
Morocco for a couple of months from November 1985 – February 1986

MIGRATION
(*A migrant is seen as someone who stays outside of their usual country of residence for at least one year.***)**

How would you describe your overall experience of migration? Could you please tell me a story that would be an illustration of your experience?

Trying really hard to integrate into the other culture so that I didn't stand out, so that I wasn't seen as being different. When my parents emigrated to the States in 1965, to the land of plenty career opportunities for my father, he bought himself a French Citroën car and Moulton bicycles for each of his four children. These bikes have small wheels, a totally different look from "normal" bicycles. When we arrived in our new neighbourhood we were quickly recognised as the English kids. Age-wise we were close together; my sister, Charlotte, was 12, my brother, Matt was 11, my brother Mark was 10 and I was 8. The TV series The Monkeys was very popular and there was one character, Davy Jones, who was English and said things like, "Mrs. Brown, you've got a lovely daughter" and "Governor" pronounced "Guv'nor." People would recognize us as the English kids and ask us to repeat those sayings. I did not like being different.

What <u>pulled</u> you towards migrating (made you consider migration as an option)?

My father always says that it was the land of possibilities, but also to join an American company and be posted outside England took us, children, out of the public school system where the options were limited. He had gone to work in the States in 1957 for six months, which meant he left my pregnant mother and three siblings behind. He didn't see me until I was three months old. He went back in 1958 again to work in California in his area of technical expertise, the testing of insecticides.
I can't remember what I anticipated before going.

What <u>pushed</u> you (eventually made you go) to migrate?

My father joined an American company in the UK and I suppose he asked to be sent to the States. We actually migrated. It was not an international assignment. We had no annual home-leave. In fact when he was posted to Switzerland 18 months later, his contract included annual home-leave to the States.

Why did you decide on the country you eventually migrated to? Was this country what you expected? How so?

My mother said that she didn't expect the cultural divide to be so great. She would quote the saying, "The English and the Americans are divided by a common language." She was also hesitant, she told us later, to go to a country where the Catholic US President, JF Kennedy, was assassinated.

What were your hopes and dreams and desires for your migratory experience? Do you think you contributed to the country you migrated to and is your contribution in line with your hopes and dreams and desires about migrating?

Like I said, I can't remember what I anticipated about moving to the States. However, I really enjoyed the States. We were given more freedom as children. The system was more relaxed. Our friends stayed out in the street, playing, until later in the evening and came back out after supper. My father had to give in and let us play until later. There was more social interaction, we had friends who lived in the neighbourhood; we all went to school together on the school bus. I had a wonderful third and fourth grade teacher who was so nice compared to the horrible teachers I had in England. We didn't have to wear school uniform. We were closer to nature, we went to a lake club in the summer. The weather was better, warmer in the summer so that we could spend all day at the lake beach. In the winter there was more snow so we could go sledding. When we moved to Switzerland, I hoped to meet Heidi. My grandmother had given me the book in 1967 before she knew we were moving to Switzerland. Heidi was my heroine. I was so disappointed when we landed on February 2, 1967, not to see the mountains and Heidi.

What was going on in your life when you left your country of origin? What were some of the things you preferred for your life and what were some of the things you would have preferred to *not* have been going on in your life before you left?

I could only understand what I didn't like about England after I left. In England I was bullied by bigger children. Bullying is so much part of the culture, it starts in primary school. In the States, I could run away from any form of bullying as soon as it started. I had friends who didn't bully me.

Would you go through the migratory process again? Why/why not? Who encouraged you to go?

I wouldn't want to go through the migratory process with my own children. In fact, I decided to stay put in Geneva because I didn't want my children to have to go through the process of adapting in the way I had to. I wanted to give them roots in Switzerland, so we became Swiss.

What did you find difficult and/or easy about the process of migration? What would you do differently if you were to redo the process again?

There are two options available in my situation:

→To work for a company or organization that would send me on an international assignment. And they would handle everything from work permit to paying for my house, and so on. International assignments are big business. PWC runs a service for outsourcing international assignments. You can get all kinds of perks being an international assignee, including "hardship bonuses." People moving to Switzerland can get this type of bonus, which is beyond all Swiss people's comprehension. How could hardship be involved in moving to their wonderful country?

→To decide to move to another country, perhaps in a warmer climate, and continue to do the same kind of work that I am currently doing but reduce my workload because my costs would be reduced. I can imagine having two homes, one in another country like Greece and one in Switzerland. Is this migration? I couldn't do what my parents did because my children are grown up, no longer dependent on me. Although I seriously doubt that I would take up the first option because I like to have my children with me and think that it will be important to be around when and if my daughter starts a family.

What do you think the pros and cons of migration are in general? Would you encourage others to migrate?

Cons: You go away from your familiar support group, your extended family. You become isolated, feel excluded from the family. You have to adapt to local customs and practices or otherwise you are not seen as making an effort, or appreciating the local culture. (However this is not necessarily required of international assignees, or expats, they are somehow excluded because of their wealth.) You have to learn another language, and go through the difficulty of not being understood by the locals.

Pros: You see new and different cultural practices and customs. You widen your perspective.

You learn to adapt, to see other points of view. You learn "cultural awareness." Perhaps you learn about diversity and inclusiveness. You may give yourself and your family new opportunities, new possibilities. You take them away from a difficult situation back home.
What do you think the government of your receiving country should/could do to make it easier for you to be there?
Provide information and training. Run information sessions for newcomers on local customs and practices, especially the bureaucratic requirements. Explain the worldview of the local community. Provide language training for newcomers. Provide special classes for the integration of migrating children, get them up-to-speed with the language. Provide education information for parents.
CULTURE **(***e.g., the ways that people, living in different part of the world, classify and represent their experiences.***)**
When you think about growing up, can you think of one specific cultural tradition (e.g., birthdays) passed on to you by your family? What was the cultural flavour of the house you grew up in? What are some of the earliest memories of these cultural influences you can recall? Can you remember any rituals, celebrations or traditions of your family? What cultural values did your family teach you? Can you tell a story that would represent an illustration of the cultural ethos of your family?
Sunday morning we went to Catholic Mass as a family. Sunday lunch was typically a cooked meal, with a meat roast, and a pudding in England. We would sit down in the dining room to eat this meal. Mealtimes, lunch and dinner, always started with a prayer. In the evening before we went to bed, we would kneel together and say a series of prayers. My mother stuck little coloured cards on the inside of our bedroom doors, reminding us to say our morning prayers. All of these traditions were not passed onto me, except perhaps the idea of having a family meal together. This is important to me, and I have tried to put up with the arguments amongst family members for years, in order to maintain this practice. I have more or less given up. The cultural flavour of the house I grew up in – Catholic guilt and suffering, Protestant work ethic, English stiff-upper-lip and division of labour between sexes, i.e. male entitlement. My father taught me a strange attachment to being anti-authority. He recognises technical and practical competence. He says you should learn something new every day in your job to keep your interest. You do your work well, that is in itself a reward. My mother showed me the values of being Catholic and the virtues thereof. She instructed me in Catholic practices, such as only being respected by men by remaining a virgin until marriage, and so on. She showed me a lot of the hardship of being a married woman; the responsibility of maintaining a good relationship between husband and wife.
What cultural influences are still now important to you? How much of a factor in your life has your cultural background been?
I often say that I am a "fake" English person. I like the English sense of humour. I have also been told that the English are creative, and I admire the wackiness, the eccentricity of the English.
Can you think of one specific cultural tradition or influence passed on to you by society in your country of origin?
Opening Christmas presents: you give a gift to another person and you watch them open it. Then that person gives a gift, perhaps to you or another person, and together you watch that person open it. It is not a free-for-all, pile of presents in front of each person; each person diving in to their pile and ignoring the others.
How did you experience the new culture you moved into? Difficult? Easy? What made it so?
It was easy for me to move into the American culture, easy for me to have an American accent, and dress in an American way.

It was more difficult to move into the Swiss-German culture. In school I was supposed to learn German yet the other kids spoke Swiss-German, a dialect, and it was difficult to learn.

How much of the culture you moved into did you absorb, do you think? Are you OK with what you absorbed? What did you absorb that you would rather now discard? Would you prefer to move away from your adopted culture back to your culture of origin? Why/Why not? What do you still find strange about your new culture? Could you tell a story or tell about an incident that would describe how you interacted with the other culture you now find yourself immersed into?

I think I absorbed quite a lot from both the American and Swiss-German culture. I'm ok with what I absorbed. I prefer to move away from the English culture because of the class system, the one-upmanship and the bullying. However there is one thing that scares me in the Swiss culture and that is the unexpected back-lash of xenophobia. When the Swiss voted against further minarets being built in Switzerland, there was an outburst of anti-Muslim articles and interviews in the press. No one predicted that outcome. Also the Swiss can be terribly harsh at times when you think that they are with you. In organisations and companies I am amazed at the harshness towards others. And if you question it, they become more righteous, more justified about why they have to be harsh. They lose their human dimension. They look so discreet, so prim and proper, and then they have these angry words that I find stun me.

What do you think the idea of culture includes? How would you describe it? If you had to write a definition about the concept of culture, what would that definition include?

Culture is the mix of common behaviours, patterns of actions, values and worldviews in a community. It is demonstrated through actions. What You See Is What You Get.

Do you experience a sense of belonging/community in the country you migrated to? Does this community which you have now become part of include local people or did you gravitate more towards your 'own' people who lives in your new country?

I am definitely part of the Geneva community, but as Geneva has over 40% of foreigners in the canton, it is easy to find like-minded people. But I am definitely not an expat, and I do not meet with expats. I would say it is more typical to have friends who work in non-Swiss companies or organisations, or have a non-Swiss partner. In my children's class in "inner city" Geneva, there were 2 Swiss out of a class of 22.

IDENTITY

(*e.g., how you would describe yourself.***)**

What in your adopted country shaped you the most in describing yourself as you would at the moment? Why do you think this shaped you in the way it has? What would you describe as the main things you learned about yourself whilst living in this culture different to your own?

I like order, cleanliness. I like the Swiss who work hard, take responsibility for their own well-being and financial security. I suppose it is in the comparison of experiences and understanding preferences. I worked in England in 1978 and couldn't stand it when people called in sick cause they wanted to go out to a party, or the way they skived off doing their work. Perhaps the combination of what my father taught me and how the Swiss seemed to have this Protestant work ethic made me feel at home.

What are some of the best memories about the culture you migrated to and do you hold some less preferable memories about this culture? Would you mind telling about a less preferable memory?

When I was a child, we went to see some expat friends. My parents moved around in the expat community in Zurich. We arrived and got out of the car, and our friends came out to greet us in the road. We were all standing there together, and their neighbours walked out of their house and past us. The neighbours stopped and said "Gruezi" and shook everybody's hand. We, the expat children, looked and smiled, as we learned to do in America. Their child looked at us and smiled too. And then the father hit his son across the back of the head, and said something, and the child stopped smiling and shook everybody's hand. I remember once talking in Swiss-German to someone and at some point he said to me, "You aren't Swiss-German, are you? I hear a slight accent, are you Dutch?" I felt

that a barrier came up between us as soon as he said that I wasn't Swiss-German.
What did you accomplish in the country you moved to that you think you would not have accomplished in your country of origin?
Learned Swiss-German and French.
Do you think there is something that you would like the Authorities (e.g., United Nations, International Office of Migration, Governments) world-wide to know that might help migrants all over the world?
That there is also a poor-rich divide of migrants. Those who are poor are supposed to make more effort in conforming to the local culture whereas those who are rich are not.
When you left your country of origin, how would you have described yourself at that stage? How would one of the significant people in your life have described you at that time?
Naughty, rebellious.
How would you describe yourself now that you have migrated? How would one of the significant persons in your life now describe you?
Independent, free-thinker.
Would you like to change anything about those descriptions you mentioned above? Who/what contributed the most to the change in the way you described yourself before you migrated and to your description of yourself now?
Different cultures have preferences for different ways of being. I was certainly not considered naughty or rebellious in the States, in comparison with American children. I was considered polite. However when I started attending Swiss-German school I was considered rebellious and independent; they thought I didn't care about them.
Are there times when you would describe yourself differently to the way you described yourself above? When would those times be and what would contribute to the descriptions about yourself that would be relevant at that stage?
I do think that I stand out in Switzerland for being "subversive." I do question formal authority and I do give feedback to people who do not think they should have to listen to my feedback.
Do you think different descriptions of yourself are true for you about yourself at different times in your life/day and when different circumstances prevail?
Yes.
How would you describe your personal identity or sense of self after your stay in your new country? Would this description be different to how you would have described yourself before you migrated?
My sense of self … I think that the different experiences have allowed me to find a place where I feel comfortable with a lot of situations. I feel I have weaved an identity of Swiss-Anglo-American. Perhaps because I don't feel that I fit in perfectly in any one of the three countries, I feel it is more acceptable to tell people that my identity is a mixture.
… and finally ...
Did we leave anything out that you would have liked to discuss during this 'conversation'? Please tell any other stories which you think are important and representative of the process of migration between countries.
No.
Can you think of any other questions which should have been included in this 'conversation'?
No.